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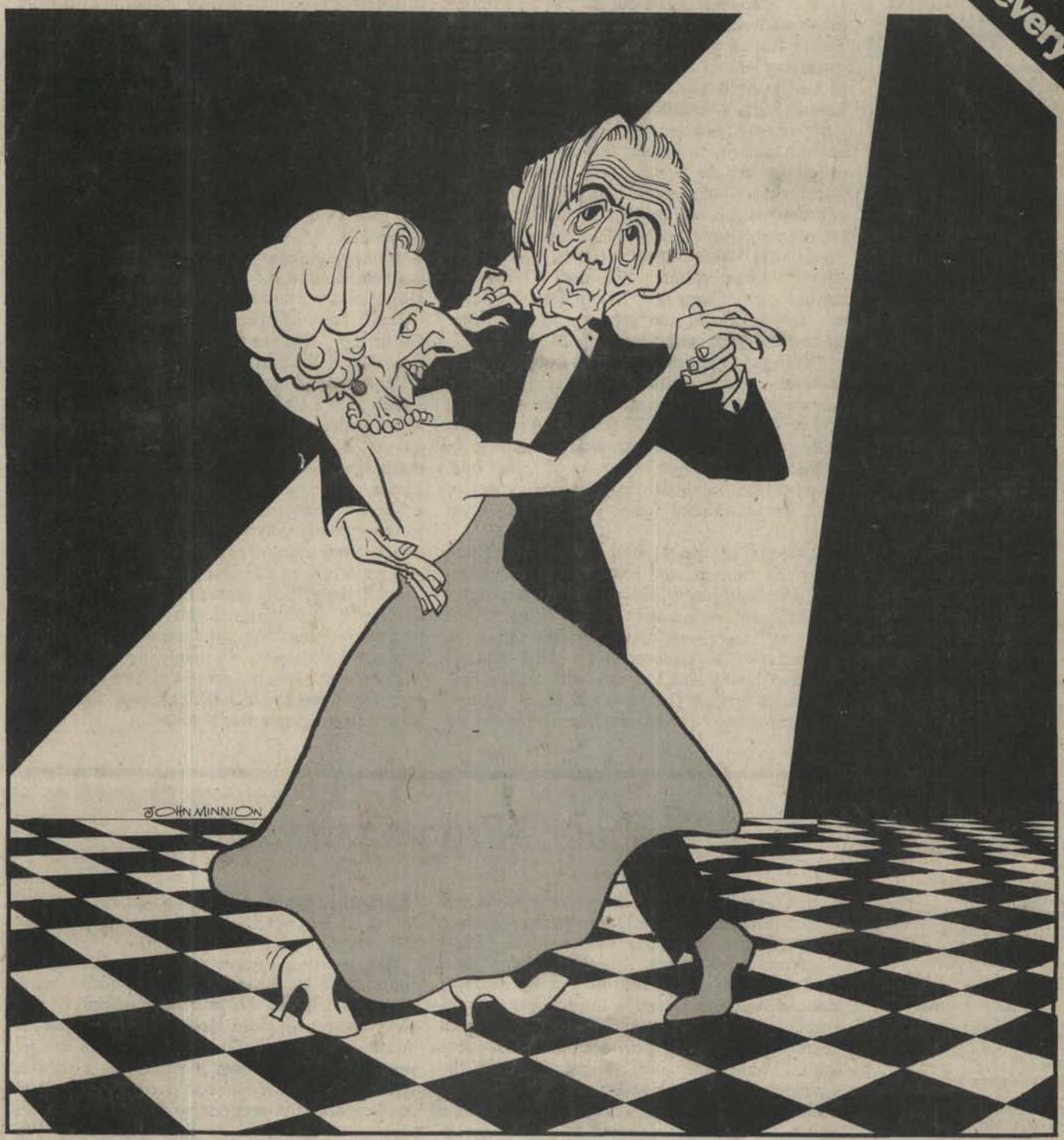
Labour's programme: the problem of pleasing everyone




# IT STILL TAKES TWO TO TANGO

## IS IT TIME FOR THE TUC TO REDEFINE ITS ROLE?

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**NEW STATESMAN** Vol 104 No 2685 3 September 1982

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# Howls from the high table

FOR A MAN who has spent most of his working life as a scholar at Oxford and Cambridge, Hugh Trevor-Roper (Lord Dacre) seems to show a surprising lack of concern for facts. Like others of his ilk, he has been greatly exercised by the Labour Party's discussion document, *Education After 18 – Expansion With Change*, which has had the temerity to suggest that post-school education in Britain is effectively biased against working-class youngsters. Echoing Mrs Thatcher's famous rallying cry, 'let our children grow tall', Trevor-Roper says in last week's *Sunday Times* that 'there is no need to argue about equality of opportunity'. Why not? 'This matter has been settled long ago,' he explains. 'Universities are no longer the preserve of the richer classes: the grant system has ended all that.'

The facts suggest otherwise. The proportion of university places awarded to working-class students is lower today than at any time in the last fifty years. In the 1930s, 23 per cent of university students came from working-class families. In 1980, despite the huge expansion of higher education which followed the Robbins report in 1963, the equivalent figure was only 19.4 per cent.

Coverage of the Labour Party's discussion paper has concentrated heavily on the description of Oxbridge as 'a major cancer in the educational system'. As a matter of fact, the authors of the report were careful to put this phrase in inverted commas, to show that it was a criticism they had heard and not one with which they necessarily agreed. The press has largely ignored this distinction. Now various dons have roused themselves from their holiday torpor to protest at this unwarranted attack on their sinecures.

As it happens, Oxbridge *is* a cancer in British education. However, discussion of this subject – which tends to degenerate into arguments about how many Nobel prizewinners have come from Oxford and Cambridge – is a distraction from the most important point. Socialists have devoted much energy to abolishing the inequities of a secondary education system which is based on the principle of the wheat and the chaff (otherwise known as grammar schools and secondary moderns); but hardly any attention has been paid to the fact that higher and further education are based on the same principles.

Hugh Trevor-Roper believes that Oxford and Cambridge 'discover talent wherever it may be found'. But the truth is that under our present system no child can go to university without A-Levels; and for a number of reasons – a climate of low expectations, pressure from parents to 'go out to work', lack of encouragement from teachers – working-class children do not take A-Levels.

The hierarchy of tertiary education in Britain – universities, polytechnics and then technical colleges and training centres – is a pretty accurate reflection of our class system. Labour has seemed remarkably unwilling to mention the dirty word 'class' in recent years, but its report on post-school education gives some hope that this may now be changing. Certainly the howls which its discussion paper has provoked from the senior common rooms and high tables suggest that it has come encouragingly near the mark. □

# Labour's Programme 1982

THE COMMITTEE and the working parties and the advisory groups toiled for months to produce the programme that will be put to the Party Conference this month. It is the first time since 1972 that such an attempt at a comprehensive exercise has been made. In introducing the programme earlier this year, the outgoing General Secretary said that it provided 'the perspective against which the party, movement and the people can judge our ability to create a better and a more just society.' The programme is not a manifesto, but when adopted by conference as laid down in Clause 5 of the Labour Party constitution, it will set the essential framework for Labour policies for years to come.

Debate within the party and in the media will concentrate on the detail of the policies being proposed. But in the present condition of the party something more fundamental is required. Starting with Henry Drucker's article in this issue, the *New Statesman* is publishing a regular series of articles designed to encourage a critical discussion of the programme from the point of view of its underlying political philosophy. We hope that the series will contribute to the identification of the principal weaknesses in current Labour thinking about the process of transition to a socialist society. We hope that the series will help to clarify coherent political principles as the basis for the Labour movement's activity in the 1980s and 1990s. We hope, too, that our readers will join in the debate as the series develops over the weeks and shall devote space to your contributions. □

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Appalling conditions in Catholic areas are creating health problems, reports Philip Sanders

# Belfast estates 'like sewage farms'

A POLIO SCARE in Catholic west Belfast has heightened doctors' concern about the appalling social conditions of the area. The one confirmed victim, two-year-old Martin Conlon of Moyard, is now in isolation in hospital. Several thousand children have been vaccinated in emergency clinics, but as many as 50,000 people are thought to be not fully immunised.

One of many anxious parents, Angela McCabe of Moyard Crescent, says: 'In bad weather the sewage is running down the streets. My six-month-old daughter was in hospital at two months with coughing and diarrhoea, and my two-year-old boy has been in six or seven times with the same thing.'

Geoff Sirockin, a microbiologist from Queen's University, Belfast, says that the sewage deposits on Moyard's streets are 'a vast open-air laboratory for bacteria with drug resistance'. He has carried out street tests which returned a bacteria count 'equivalent to that on a sewage farm'.

Dr Joe Hendron, a local GP and the Social Democratic and Labour Party's spokesman on health, says that Moyard is 'the most deprived area in the British Isles'. A two-year campaign to have rat-infested blocks of flats demolished has been unsuccessful. Dr Hendron describes the flats as 'not fit for animals, never mind humans'. In Moyard and the adjacent district of New Barnsley there are regular sewage problems, with excrement seeping into the streets. Most of Belfast's cases of hepatitis and jaundice (which are transmitted by excrement) occur in these two areas.

The Northern Ireland Office's Department of Environment claims that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with Moyard's sewage system and that 'the problems are directly attributable to drains and manholes constantly being blocked through vandalism'. Moyard residents deny this, and point out that the same accusations of vandalism were made when dysentery broke out in nearby Turf Lodge; the affected block in Turf Lodge was, nevertheless, later demolished.

Residents in these disaster areas are resigned to official negligence.

**West Belfast children: nowhere else to play**

*Jeremy Nicholl*

In the Divis flats, a monstrous concrete complex at the foot of the Falls Road, the local priest has just organised a fortnight-long community clean-up. Rubbish was cleared away, and communal areas were scrubbed and painted. But tenants were left wondering why they should pay rates and taxes if they are to be expected to do the job themselves.

Unionist-dominated local councils in Belfast still discriminate in the way they perform their few remaining duties such as refuse collection and providing recreational facilities. Twinbrook, on the fringe of Catholic west Belfast, lies within the boundaries of the staunchly unionist Lisburn Council; but SDLP councillor Billy McDonnell claims that the council is not fulfilling its statutory obligations to the estate.

His remarks are strikingly illustrated by the contrast between Twinbrook and Areema, a small Protestant corner of the estate which is excellently serviced. In Areema, not only are the streets regularly swept, the grass mown and a well-maintained play-park made available for young children, but even the weeds between paving stones are painstakingly removed with weed-killer. In Twinbrook proper, refuse collection is irregular, street cleaning is rare and the only outdoor playthings for children are abandoned vehicles and other scrap. Twinbrook too has its open sewers where excrement floats down the middle of the street. □

Marie Cahill finds a loophole in new law to protect married women

# Scots sign away rights

SCOTTISH WOMEN may already be signing away the rights they won this week under the Matrimonial Homes (Family Protection) Scotland Act.

The Act, which came into force on 1 September, gives women in Scotland the right to stay in the matrimonial home even if they are not the tenants or owners. It also gives them increased protection from domestic violence.

However, a clause in the Act allows women to renounce all their new rights. Maureen McGinn of Shelter says that 'we see a danger that people might renounce their occupancy rights either because they are optimistic about the relationship and therefore think the rights are irrelevant, or because they may be persuaded to do so by a landlord or an institution such as a bank or building society as a condition of obtaining accommodation'.

Sue Robertson of Scottish Women's Aid says that women can sign agreements and not realise that they have lost protection until it is too late. The Building Societies Association has given assurances that the clause will not be written into mortgage agreements, but women will have to consent to any loan being made to their husbands and undertake to continue with the mortgage repayments should the husband stop paying.

The new Act also deals with domestic violence, and enables a woman to obtain an exclusion order to keep her husband out of the house if his conduct 'is injurious to the physical or mental health of the spouse or any child'.

One provision which differs from English law is that in Scotland the police will have the power to arrest a man who violates an interdict (the Scottish equivalent of an injunction) to stay away from the house. In England and Wales the wife has to apply for the power of arrest and the courts have often been reluctant to grant it.

The new Act also allows one spouse to apply to the courts for a transfer of tenancy. The Housing Act of 1980, which gave tenants security of tenure, meant that local authorities were unable to take the tenancy from the husband and transfer it to the wife. This caused a number of difficulties in England but has now been circumvented by the Scottish legislation; all transfers of tenancy without one party's consent will be decided by the courts. □

Fiona Mallon reports on a little-known deal with the junta

# UK planes for Chile

THE FIRST consignment of British Hawker Hunter jets to be sent to Chile since the arms embargo of 1976 were flown out of Brize Norton at the height of the Falklands dispute.

On 24 April, as General Haig's peace plans went through their death throes, a Boeing 747 from the Los Angeles Flying Tiger Line airlifted six former RAF Hunter FGA-9s for delivery to the Chilean government. It is believed that the Boeing made two deliveries, taking six aircraft each time.

The delivery coincided with the diversion of a British ship, RFA Tidepool, from the Chilean port of Val Paris to the task force. The ship was due to be handed over to the Chilean navy that month.

Although Chile claimed neutrality during the Falklands crisis, the delivery could explain their tacit cooperation with Britain in the conflict, particularly when a Sea King helicopter crashed in southern Chile.

The Ministry of Defence and the Foreign Office will not confirm or deny that a delivery was made. The MoD said that 'our policy is that we don't discuss defence sales, unless they have been announced by the country concerned. The same would apply if the jets were given as a gift'.

Although Hunters are practically obsolete in European terms they play an important role in the Chilean front line and are used for ground attack and close support. Supplies from Britain were stopped when General Pinochet seized power in 1973. The Labour government placed a complete ban on defence sales to Chile in 1976 but this was lifted in 1980 by the Conservatives.

Further signs of harmonious relations between Chile and Britain came when the first member of Chile's military junta to be welcomed to Britain, General Fernando Mathei, chief of the air force, was invited to the Farnborough air show. The invitation was hotly opposed by the Labour Party, the Chile Solidarity Campaign and the trade unions. But on 17 August General Mathei suddenly discovered that he had pressing business elsewhere and would not be able to come to Farnborough. □

**RUTH FIRST MEMORIAL MEETING**
Wed., 8 Sept., 6.30 p.m.
Hampstead Town Hall
Haverstock Hill, London NW3



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Fiona Mallon reports on the agonies endured by children who take free school meals and are made to feel ashamed

# The miseries of a free meal ticket

CHILDREN receiving free school meals still suffer from the stigma attached to the service, according to a report by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG). The report, to be published next week, says that 'poor children can be caught in a nutritional Catch-22 over free school meals: eat them and feel ashamed, or avoid the stigma by not claiming and go hungry'. The authors claim that this can be eliminated only by the introduction of universal free school meals.

The report contains many examples of children who have been teased or bullied because they are poor enough to qualify for free meals. One woman, whose children had claimed free meals when she was unemployed two years earlier, wrote to CPAG about the reaction when she became unemployed again: 'When I mentioned to my son that I think we are entitled to free school meals he begged me not to apply as he has just got over the humiliation of being the only one on free dinners, and wants to be like everyone else.' Another parent wrote: 'My 10-year-old son will not take free dinners again, he cannot put up with the jibes.'

There are a number of practices which encourage the stigmatising of poor children by making them more easily identifiable – physical segregation at meal times, restrictions on the choice of food and the teachers' habit of calling out the names of children on free meals.

The use of tokens is another cause of misery. One parent told CPAG: 'Children who receive free meals are issued with tickets so everyone knows who has free meals now. To try to counteract this my son requires money each day so he can hand it over with his ticket in the hope that no one sees his ticket. I feel compelled to give him this extra money to save his embarrassment.'

Matters have gone from bad to worse since the passage of the 1980 Education Act, because fewer children – other than those claiming free meals – are taking the low quality, highly priced meals which the Act made possible. Poor children thus stand out in the crowd even more than they did before. The CPAG report is particularly critical of the diminished nutritional standards permitted under the 1980 Act, which could have serious implications for the next generation given the established link between the nutrition of today's children and the health of tomorrow's babies.

The CPAG report argues that, at the very least, certain practical steps could be taken to prevent poor children from being singled out in front of their classmates. It also calls for a reintroduction of nationally fixed prices and minimum nutritional standards. But universal free meals are the ultimate goal: 'A fully subsidised service providing meals of a good standard should not be too much to ask of a society if it genuinely supports equality of opportunity for each child to reach his or her full potential within the education system.' □

*The report is available, price £1.25 (post free), from CPAG, 1 Macklin St, London WC2.*

Rob Edwards on Glasgow's housing problems

# Gorbals sold to private developers

LABOUR-CONTROLLED Glasgow district council has been forced to sell off 759 damp-invested flats in the Gorbals to private developers because of Government cutbacks.

The Hutchesontown 'E' flats have been a source of controversy in the city since they were built between 1969 and 1973. Their 'Tracoba'-style design – imported straight from the South of France – was singularly inappropriate for Glasgow's very different climate. Problems were worsened when the council ignored the National Building Agency's approved specifications for system-built housing and opted for multi-storey deck-access flats. As a result, tenants have experienced severe dampness, including fungal growth, water beetles and unpleasant smells.

After a prolonged and, at times, bitter campaign by tenants, the district council accepted responsibility for the problem instead of blaming tenants, and agreed to rehouse those affected. Now that nearly all the 759 flats are empty, the council had to decide whether to improve, mothball, demolish or sell them.

Remedial works including structural alterations, dry-lining and some heating changes were estimated to cost £11 million, a figure which, given the acute shortage of resources and other pressing priorities, the Labour Council felt they could not afford. The council's housing capital allocation from the government has been slashed by nearly half in real terms over the last four years.

Mothballing the flats for two years, in the hope of more money becoming available, would have cost at least £250,000 for security and could have incurred perhaps a further £1 million in the event of vandalism. Demolition, which would have cost £2 million, was thought irresponsible as the buildings were structurally sound and technical solutions were available to their problems.

Labour, therefore, reluctantly decided to put the flats on the market. It is understood that Barratts have already offered £1 million, although the council is hoping for a rather better price in the end.

Housing convenor Councillor John Kernaghan said it was a 'tragic' decision but there had been no alternative. He pointed out that the capital receipts from the sale would be used to help fund the building of 31 sheltered houses for the elderly nearby.

According to the district council it would cost a massive £140 million to tackle the fifth of all Glasgow's public sector houses thought to suffer from dampness and condensation. The Gorbals flats contain the highest concentration of dampness problems in the city but are not among the 17,000 houses subject to what officials euphemistically call 'water penetration'. □

Jonathan Coe looks at a new black newspaper

# Voice not broken

LONDON'S FIRST black newspaper, *The Voice*, launched at last week's Notting Hill Carnival, has run into some difficulties. But as the more conservative Fleet Street papers prepare to gloat over the foolishness of giving public funds to 'amateur businessmen', members of London's black community are suggesting that any obituary notices are premature.

*The Voice* is run by Vee Tee Ay Media Resources Ltd, of which the main shareholder is Val McCalla, a one-time accountant and a former contributor to *East End News*. His co-director is Alex Pascall, presenter of the BBC Radio London programme *Black Londoners*. What has distinguished *The Voice* from other Afro-Asian-Caribbean papers is its editorial policy, which aims to reflect London from the viewpoint of black British citizens of all races. Existing papers tend to look at Britain from an ex-colonist, African and Caribbean point of view.

*The Voice* has produced two issues so far. Finance has come from Barclays Bank (£60,000), Hackney Council (£7,000 for the launch) and the Greater London Council (£1,000). It is distributed by the *New Statesman*.

Val McCalla says that he wants to have a direct hand in the paper's editorial content and that he has taken some unilateral decisions. The editor, Robert Govender, was dismissed by McCalla and the production editor, Stan Winer, resigned. One contentious issue between McCalla and the editor was how much editorial space should be given to a picket for David Kitson, a white man, jailed in South Africa, to be held outside the South African Embassy.

Alex Pascall has condemned McCalla's action. He insists that *The Voice* will make something of its successful reception only if proper business management procedures are followed. He has called for new directors to be nominated. But he accepts that there will be difficulties: 'We are attempting something new in publications – blacks have always had to struggle for everything, and people are too quick to write off our initiatives at the first sign of difficulty. We have in *The Voice* a sound ship: what we need is a captain to match.'

McCalla's view is that the complexities of the launch required unusual methods: 'I don't pretend to be a journalist, but we've got a going concern here and it's my job to protect its interests and make sure it succeeds.' □



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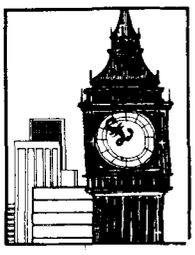

**PATRICK WINTOUR**

# Really, no Really, Bad News

THERE ARE three schools of thought in the world of trade union media studies. The first is that of the Glasgow University Media Working Group (authors of *Bad News; More Bad News; Really Bad News* and presumably soon *Really, No Really, Bad News).* The second, more unorthodox school is the Clive Jenkins Media Abuse Group. This takes particular interest in the welfare of General Secretaries and believes in putting down motions to TUC Congress calling for 'mercenary and bitter journalists' (believed to be a reference to Richard Ingrams) to be blacklisted and for criteria to be established for 'monitoring' industrial correspondents. The third is that of the TUC Media Working Group.

The Working Group's chief endeavour has been its pursuit of the Right of Reply Campaign. To this end, the TUC established a policy in 1979 to 'campaign for a reformed, independent and impartial Press Council as a prerequisite for trade union support', and for union participation in the Council. The following year the National Union of Journalists, after a long internal debate, pulled out of the Press Council, claiming that it was a creature of the proprietors – ineffectual, incapable of reform and staffed by white, middle-class members of the establishment, just the kind of people proprietors would want monitoring their editors' partiality.

To the NUJ, the Press Council's timid, and unenforceable judgments made it an otiose creature triumphantly slamming the stable door after the horse has bolted. The union would try to use its own code of conduct instead.

The TUC accepted the NUJ's decision to pull out and there has been little complaint about it within the NUJ subsequently. If the Right of Reply was to be pursued, the Press Council was not the chosen route. Late in 1980, the Campaign for Press Freedom appeared to be forcing home the attack by setting up an independent Commission of Enquiry into the Press Council, chaired by the barrister Geoff Robertson. His detailed report is due in the next few months. Its major original contribution will be a consumer survey of those who have complained to the Council, which will expose the Council's method of operation. In short, the last days of the Press Council, in its existing form, seemed imminent.

But the TUC has been vigorously lobbied by Ken Morgan, Director of the Press Council and former General Secretary of the NUJ. The empty chair policy of the NUJ has greatly affected the Council's authority, and now Morgan – in a desperate bid – has managed to persuade the TUC bureaucracy to try to push the NUJ back on to the Press Council. (Almost by coincidence, a string of pro-union judgments have come from the council.) But the Executive of the NUJ has decided by a large majority to ignore the TUC's advice and its delegation is likely to compain to next week's congress.

As a *quid pro quo* for securing the NUJ's return, the TUC Media Working Group had been trying to wring concessions from the Press Council. The concessions sought were hardly ambitious, yet the TUC has not won any of them.

According to a memorandum to the General Council, the Media Working Group first asked that eight of the nine seats allocated to journalists on the 36-strong Press Council should come from the NUJ (the remaining seat being left to the smaller and non-TUC-affiliated Institute of Journalists). Before its departure, the NUJ had only four seats, and was refused more on the grounds that all Council members were impartial jurors and not representatives of any other body. The TUC memo says that the Press Council has 'agreed not to place any barriers' in the way of the NUJ and press proprietors discussing the matter – 'once the NUJ resumes its seats on the Council'. This doesn't add up to a row of beans: the NUJ has no need to obtain the permission of the Press Council before it enters any discussion with proprietors.

The TUC's next intrepid demand – that there be no journalists or newspaper proprietors on the Press Council's complaints committee – has been dropped. Thrusting onwards, however, the TUC has been seeking an assurance that all the Council's critical adjudications be given prominence equal to the original offending article. (Newspaper editors' habit of playing down the Council's findings is a running sore.) The TUC now reports triumphantly that the Press Council wants 'reasonably comparable prominence' to be given to its adjudications. No means of forcing editors to carry out this wish are hinted at. But the Press Council does promise to issue a rebuke when a newspaper has been criticised by the Council and refuses to publish the judgment. Not one blow with the feather duster, but *two*.

The fourth concession concerns the tortoise-like speed with which the Press Council issues its judgment on complaints. The effectiveness of a critical adjudication is obviously diminished if no-one can remember the original article and it has gone uncorrected for a year. The Press Council told the Royal Commission on the Press in 1977 that the 'Secretariat takes a special pride in prompt response to communications, that most complaints are dealt with within three months, many in substantially less time and some take longer.' It also claimed that the Council's work is 'characterised by an absence of the bureaucratic limitations which would inevitably arise in the case of a more formal body with statutory powers.' The Commission, nevertheless, admonished the Council's slowness – a position somewhat justified by the Council's inability to produce a response to the Commission in the following three years.

The Independent Commission is likely to find that delay is the single biggest criticism complainants make of the Council. For instance, last Friday, the Thamesdown Council for Racial Equality had a complaint partially upheld by the Press Council over a headline published in the *Swindon Evening Advertiser* 15 months ago. Clive Norris of Thamesdown's CRE told me it has taken the Council five months to reach a decision from the moment it received the complaint in the exact form it wanted. Mr Norris did not know the *Advertiser* even now could refuse to print the judgment.

The Council makes virtually no independent investigation of complaints, but instead regards itself as a postbox for letters that go to and fro between editors and complainants. The telephone, now widely in use in newspaper and other high-tech offices, has not apparently reached the Press Council. Little wonder that the majority of exhausted complainants drop their case before the end.

All the TUC has managed to extract from the Press Council is a statement that 'time taken to process complaints should be reduced as far as possible'. Exactly that promise was made by the Council after the 1977 Royal Commission on the Press – to no effect.

Finally, the TUC has been trying to get the Council to draw up a code of conduct. This, too, was advocated by the Royal Commission, without results. Now according to the TUC memorandum the Press Council has agreed to 'codify its statements of principle and adjudications which will, in all essentials, provide in a single volume an exposition of standards expected from the press'. The man who will draw up this crucial document is Noel Paul, Ken Morgan's predecessor at the Press Council, who is on record as saying: 'I believe that it would be a disastrous mistake to move in the direction of setting up any kind of code of conduct for the press'. A book of case law is not a code.

None of the TUC criticisms of the Press Council touch the point that the Council deliberately ignored the first and fourth object of the Council – to 'preserve the established freedom of the press and to keep under review developments likely to restrict the supply of information of public interest and importance.' Its lobbying and publicity work in this field, such as the Contempt of Court Act, has been non-existent. □

*Peter Kellner will be back next week.*



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# Return to Trafalgar Square

The 1982 TUC Congress meets as the trade union leadership finds itself increasingly edged to the side of the political stage. HARRY URWIN, a former member of the TUC General Council, and GREGOR MURRAY trace the history of TUC corporatism and the new options facing the TUC

AT NEXT WEEK'S Trades Union Congress the press will inevitably focus on the personalities of a few leaders, splits between right and left and the implications that these might have for the Labour Party. Yet in economic, organisational, financial and political terms, the trade union movement now faces a more hostile climate than at any time since the defeats of the 1920s. What really needs to be scrutinised is the impact of this new climate on the TUC.

The TUC has been driven to question the traditional role it has played in the consensus politics of post-war Britain. Recent public sector disputes have pushed it to assume a new strategic importance in coordinating its affiliates. Annual jamboree? Honest broker? Corporate state manager? Operational arm and general staff of an industrial army? Or political mobiliser?

To appreciate the significance of this change, we must first outline the extent of the crisis that has prompted it. Manufacturing output has remained stagnant at June 1975 levels; and business confidence sags still further. The labour market reflects this, of course. The widespread shedding of labour, the demise of industries and the decimation of regions has pushed unemployment to record levels.

The recession has had a very direct impact on trade union organisation and strength. Trade union leaders and activists are despondent as never before. Not only is it a losing battle to maintain living standards, but the inevitable effect of mass unemployment is that workers still in employment are desperate to keep their jobs. Employers' efforts to introduce new technologies and restructure plants and organisations have forced a pace of change that shop stewards could ill afford to reject for fear of something worse. There has been, moreover, a growing incidence of trade unionists on a scale that has not occurred since the 1920s.

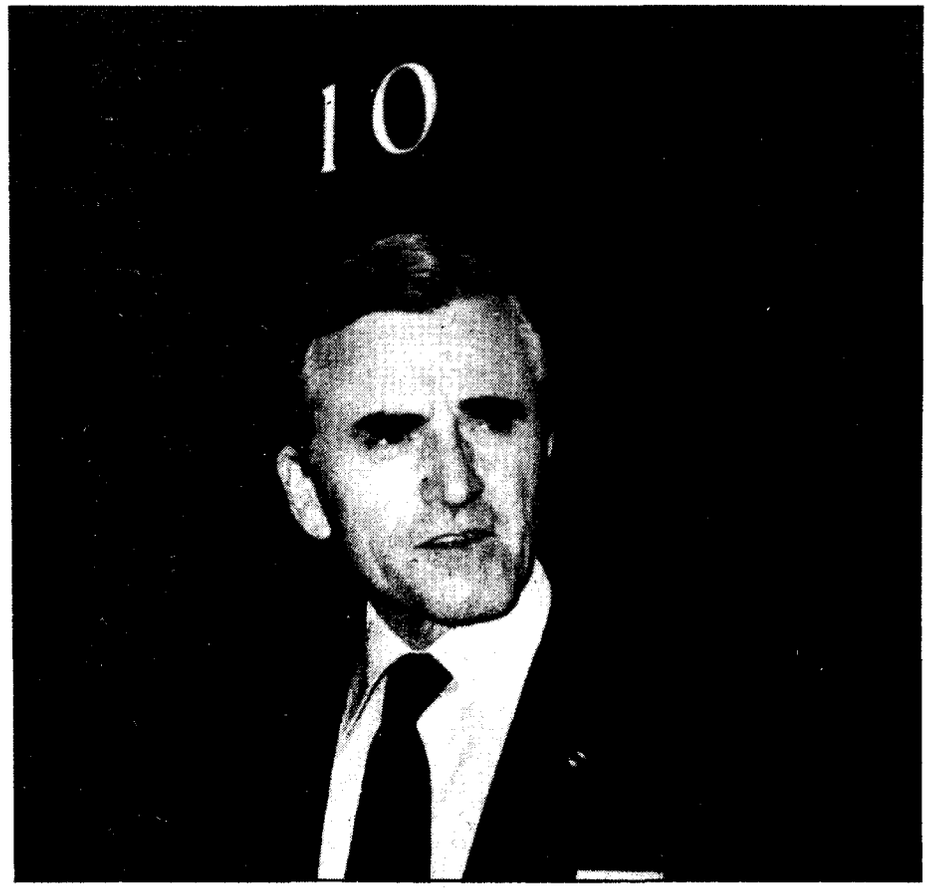
When the TUC affiliated membership figures for the beginning of 1982 are announced at next week's Congress, they will match the previous year's loss of well over half a million people. With the exception of a few minor hiccups the TUC's affiliated membership has grown continuously since the mid 1930s and very rapidly through the 1970s. This two-year decline represents the biggest proportional decrease since the aftermath of the General Strike and the largest absolute two-year decline since the depression of the early 1920s.

The loss has been concentrated largely in manufacturing, the traditional heartland of trade unionism, badly affecting industrial giants such as the Transport Workers, the Engineers, the GMWU and the steelworkers, as well as many smaller unions. Severe financial constraints have been created – and now there is scarcely a union in the TUC which is not seeking to cut costs or exploring possible mergers. Despite reluctance to relinquish their autonomy, some affiliates are now suggesting that the TUC take over membership services such as research and legal advice that individual unions have developed through the years of trade union expansion but can no longer afford.

THE CHANGE in political climate has made an even greater impact on the traditional role of the TUC. The present Government has marked a rupture with the post-war consensus politics by renouncing any commitment to full employment; no other post-war government has been willing to run the political risks of such a sustained high level of unemployment. At the same time it has challenged the traditional state commitment to collective bargaining as the preferred method of establishing wages and conditions. There is undeniably a view among Government economic policy-makers that the free market economy would work more successfully in Britain if there were weak rather than strong trade unions. The Thatcher government has also questioned the political legitimacy of trade unionism and its symbols: if that does not add up to a total rejection of the TUC's traditional mediating role between unions and the state, it means, at the very least, that the TUC role in state institutions is being largely ignored.

To assess the significance of this rupture for the TUC, we must first look at what has happened in the past. The TUC was established by a number of individual unions as an instrument to advance the pursuit of industrial goals, especially the acceptance and maintenance of trade unionism, through political representations. The individual affiliates first agreed on common policies at an annual Congress; and these were subsequently pursued in the political arena by a General Council elected by and accountable to each Congress. While the Congress has remained an annual event, its importance has more often been supplanted by the deliberations of the General Council and, increasingly, by the more detailed work of its sub-committees and full-time staff. The perennial ambiguity of the TUC has resided in the conflict between acting as a political representative for labour and a more authoritative co-ordinating body. The zealous maintenance of affiliates' autonomy, however, ensured that

**For how much longer is the welcome mat going to be out?**



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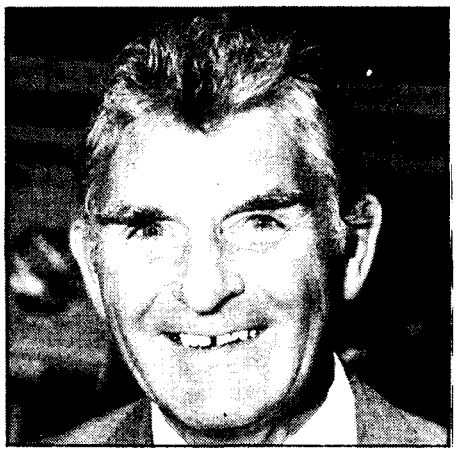

David Fowler

the TUC played only a limited industrial role.

Thus the TUC has concentrated on presenting its policies and exerting influence on whatever government was in power. Its political objectives have been limited to seeking and maintaining a kind of corporate citizenship for the voice of labour in the decision-making of the state. Whatever the disagreements over a wide range of policy issues, the basic state acceptance of the role of collective bargaining and the political legitimacy of the TUC ensured that the TUC was able to find some accommodation with the state. As former TUC General Secretary George Woodcock put it in 1963: 'The TUC left Trafalgar Square a long time ago; and seeks to deal with affairs of the moment in committee rooms with people who have power . . .'

Post-war governments have been equally anxious to find some accommodation with the TUC, as economic crises regularly pushed policy-makers to seek restraint of wage increases. Labour governments in particular have bargained with the TUC in order to secure the acquiescence of shop-floor trade unionism in voluntary wages policies. Despite the political benefits gained during periods such as the Social Contract, assent to wage restraint has inevitably provoked tensions between the TUC's industrial and political roles, between affiliate autonomy and central authority.

It was in the early to mid 1960s that the British economy's relatively poor rate of growth was increasingly associated with industrial relations problems such as unconstitutional strikes, an absence of legally binding collective agreements and inter-union rivalries. It was argued that something had to be done about 'the unions'. Two solutions were put on offer and the alternation between them has characterised state attempts to deal with 'the unions' over the past 20 years.

THE RESTRICTIVE solution proposed increased legal intervention to control trade union activities. Given the recognised bias of the common law legal system against union organisation (unions' legal freedom of action depended on immunities from liability rather than on the basis of any rights), such a solution was anathema for the TUC.

The solution of the reformers, on the other hand, argued that many of the perceived problems were merely symptomatic of the real causes which were antiquated bargaining structures, payment systems and management techniques. It was this formula which captured the enthusiasm of the majority of the Donovan Commission. Not surprisingly that majority included George Woodcock. Indeed, Woodcock became head of the Commission on Industrial Relations, a body created to usher in some of the prescribed changes on a voluntary basis. Involvement in such state machinery was the price the TUC willingly paid in order to avoid a greater degree of restrictionism.

Not all politicians were convinced of the efficacy or the electoral credibility of the reform approach. The non-voluntaristic, penal elements of the Labour government's In Place of Strife in 1969 raised the greatest ire among trade unionists. This proposed legislation was eventually withdrawn in return for the TUC's famous 'solemn and binding undertaking' to use its powers of internal intervention on unofficial, inter-union and some other disputes. The TUC's intervention in the recent ASLEF dispute arose out of exactly these kinds of provisions.

David Fowler

**Perhaps the most significant issue at Congress – at least for its symbolism – will be the debate over the TUC's involvement in the National Economic Development Council. Left-wing trade union leaders, such as Ken Gill of the white-collar union TASS (above), have said it is absolute hypocrisy to pretend any useful discussion now occurs at NEDC and that there is no longer any consensus over the handling of the economy. He has received surprising support from Bill Sirs, the right-wing steelworkers' leader (above, left). His union, newly cut by a third due to steel closures, wants an end to tripartism.**

The restrictive approach was resurrected once again with the Heath Government's 1971 Industrial Relations Act. While the mythologies of the defeat of this Act are well-known, it was not universally unpalatable within the union movement. The Heath Government was actually offering to strengthen trade union bureaucracy – with licensed closed shops (or 'agency shops' as they were called), statutory recognition procedures and other tempting measures, provided that centralised union authorities would clamp down on shop-floor activity. Responsible union leaders had to be legally encouraged to contain their irresponsible members through such measures as legally enforceable collective agreements and registering as 'state-approved' trade unions. If shop-floor trade unionism could be nicely tied-up, then there could well be a sunny place in the corporate state for some trade union leaders. The fatal flaw in the Act, however, lay in its strong individualist ethos which was based on the contradictory view that industrial relations problems really resulted from militant leaders misleading their moderate members.

The 1974-1979 Labour government relied on a wide-ranging, voluntary understanding with the TUC which considerably enhanced the latter's political authority. The previous status quo in collective labour law was fully restored; and individuals were given new legal rights such as protection against unfair dismissals.

The present government has adopted a new form of restrictionism which not only seeks to exert legal control over union activities, but also questions the institutional value of trade unionism. It implies that trade union leaders at all levels are unrepresentative of their membership and that collective bargaining is both socially and economically undesirable. Leading politicians have attacked trade union immunities as undue privileges – although governments since 1906 onwards have seen these as the most appropriate way to provide trade union rights within our common law legal system. Singled out for special legal disapproval are closed shops and even 'union-only' and 'recognition-only' practices, which constitute the nuts and bolts of trade union organisation in the workplace. Even the protection of minimum wages and conditions through such instruments as the Fair Wages Resolution may now be scrapped. Are the lowest paid to be treated as no more than commodities to be bought and sold at the cheapest market rate? If so, the government will have to consider renouncing other conventions which it has ratified and which are seen as part of the basic framework of labour rights in any democracy. The combination of economic, legislative and political initiatives is perceived as a challenge to the existence of unionism itself.

If the TUC is no longer taken seriously in its participation in tripartite bodies, can it justify its continued presence? Already prominent trade unionists have been dropped from state bodies and the TUC representatives have withdrawn from the National Enterprise Board. Earlier this year, the TUC faced the prospect of withdrawing from the Manpower Services Commission if some compromise was not forthcoming over the government's plans for a compulsory training scheme. The TUC feels that there is a real need to be involved in areas such as training, health and safety, and the prevention of sexual and racial discrimination. Yet it could not, for example, remain associated with youth schemes which it regards as a form of conscription.

Many unions have traditionally argued that any avenue for expressing the trade union point of view should be preserved. But some now feel that a symbolic gesture, such as TUC withdrawal from the National Economic Development Council, should be made in order to demonstrate their dissatisfaction and deep frustration with the



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ernment's economic and legal policies. If this is agreed at next week's Congress, it will mark a further break with the pattern of post-war politics.

WHAT WOULD be the role of the TUC outside the corridors of power? Would it seek industrial means to express its political views? Does it even have the mechanisms to mobilise its membership and ensure their commitment? Would it be forced to challenge the legitimacy of the state in the same way that the state has questioned the political legitimacy of trade unionism?

Despite the reluctance of some unions, the TUC has once before challenged Woodcock's view that its Trafalgar Square days were over. By expelling more than 20 dissenting affiliates, the General Council was able to muster considerable internal authority and mount an effective campaign against the Heath Government's Industrial Relations Act. Its newly asserted leadership was based on an increased accountability to Congress. At that stage, the legitimacy of neither collective bargaining nor the TUC was in question; and the TUC limited its political objectives to seeking a repeal of the controversial legislation. When the Heath Government made its famous 'U-turn', the TUC was quick to embrace many of the subsequent tripartite initiatives, such as the 1972 Industry Act and the creation of the MSC. With little prospect of another such 'U-turn' and the diminishing probability of a sympathetic Labour government in the near future, the TUC is compelled to adopt new roles and strategies.

Pressures from individual affiliates for increased co-ordination and expertise have fostered a marked improvement in the range and quality of TUC policies and services over the past decade. Opposition to government's economic policies has pushed the TUC to develop more comprehensive alternatives. The detailed work of its industry committees, developed during the past ten years, has begun to pay dividends in terms of both policy formulation and union coordination. The plight of trade unionists in many of the industries badly affected by the recession has necessitated the production of more specific industrial policies; recent documents and campaigns – in areas such as cable technology, regional planning and industrial investment – demonstrate the fruits of this labour. Never has a TUC industry committee played a more important co-ordinating role than in the present Health Services dispute.

Public expenditure cuts, the effects of the slump on manufacturing, public sector pay policies and Government plans for the privatisation of public services and nationalised industries virtually ensure that the TUC will further develop this co-ordinating and campaigning role. A combination of political hostility to trade unionism and monetarist economic policies will increasingly place the TUC in confrontation with the state. Industrial disputes thus assume a directly political character. Moreover, the very severity of the recession enhances the authority of the TUC vis-a-vis its weakened affiliates. Although the TUC has increasingly asserted its authority in inter-union disputes, rarely has it used its powers of intervention so starkly as it did in the July ASLEF dispute.

The TUC General Secretary, Len Murray, told the 1981 Congress that the issue was how to 'develop the TUC as an operational arm of the Movement'. This is a marked departure from its past role; but present circumstances are rapidly propelling the TUC in this direction – as is the lack of Government interest in TUC policies. Initiatives such as the People's March for Jobs, Union Day and the demonstration against the Corrie Abortion Bill are but a few examples.

Whatever the merits of TUC policies and campaigns, they ultimately depend on their ability to enthuse and mobilise trade union members. The heart of the challenge to the legitimacy of trade unionism in the 1980s is the assertion that trade union leaders and activists do not represent their members.

The long years of the post-war state commitment to collective bargaining and political dialogue with the trade unions has left a double legacy. Firstly, the trade union movement has enjoyed a sustained period of growth. Never has it reached an equivalent size or density, nor exerted such influence. Secondly, however, in this period of positive encouragement of unionism, there has been a diminishing necessity to win the support of trade unionists for the cause of trade unionism. Opinion polls say that trade unions have never been so unpopular among trade unionists themselves.

There can be no easy road to trade unionism. For people to be convinced trade unionists they have to know what it is all about and believe in it enough to make sacrifices for their fellow trade unionists. It is not possible to transform non-unionism into unionism by making some arrangement with either governments or employers. It can only be done through persuasion and leadership. The greatest task that faces the trade union movement in the 1980s will be the battle to convince people of the need for trade unionism.

The burden of the TUC's increasing central authority is that to prove its political legitimacy it must demonstrate that it does represent its membership. Thus the TUC must manifest its accountability at all levels. If the 1982 Congress adopts a system of automatic representation on the TUC General Council in preference to some form of electoral accountability, no matter how imperfect, that will be a retrograde step.

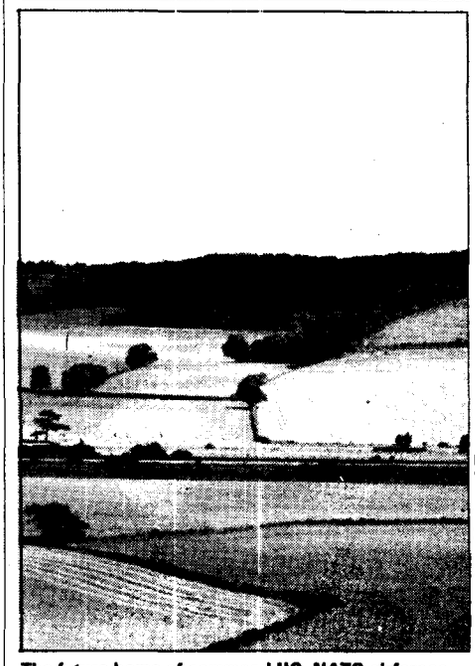
The paradox of the TUC's enhanced coordinating role is the reassertion of the perennial tension between central authority and work-place autonomy. If members cannot freely play their part and expand their role, then the TUC will engender neither commitment nor mobilisation. If the TUC cannot mobilise its membership, then it will not meet the attack on its legitimacy. This is the challenge facing the 1982 TUC. □

Harry Urwin is former deputy general secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and was for 11 years a member of the TUC General Council. He and Gregor Murray are respectively Associate Fellow and Research Associate at the SSRC Industrial Relations Research Unit at the University of Warwick.

GREEN BELTS

# Trusting the National Trust

MERVYN JONES looks at a fight to save a beauty spot from NATO



Courtesy The National Trust

**The future home of command HQ, NATO airforces**

A MILE from the Buckinghamshire village of Naphill, what was until this summer a peaceful meadow presents a scene of formidable activity: builders' huts, bulldozers, cranes and derricks. The machines are there to scoop out an underground bunker which will house the command HQ of NATO air forces. Covering nine acres, the hole will go 20 metres deep into the earth. Air vents and radio masts will rise 10 metres above ground and, since the site tops a ridge in the Chiltern Hills, will dominate the view from miles around.

The meadow, part of Hollybush Farm, is surrounded on three sides by Park Wood, much valued for its venerable beech trees. Wood and meadow belong to the Bradenham Estate, formerly the property of a Mr E. E. Cook (of the Thomas Cook family). Cook, who died in 1956, bequeathed the estate to the National Trust.

There are no fewer than four official reasons, aside from aesthetic or social reasons, why this place should be sacrosanct. It is in the Green Belt. It is also in a listed Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The wood, because of its fine mature trees, is a Grade One site of Special Scientific Interest. And land given to the National Trust is inalienable – that is, it cannot (unless Parliament passes a special Act) be given away, sold or leased for purposes other than the existing use, which is normally public open space or farming.

The Council of the National Trust,



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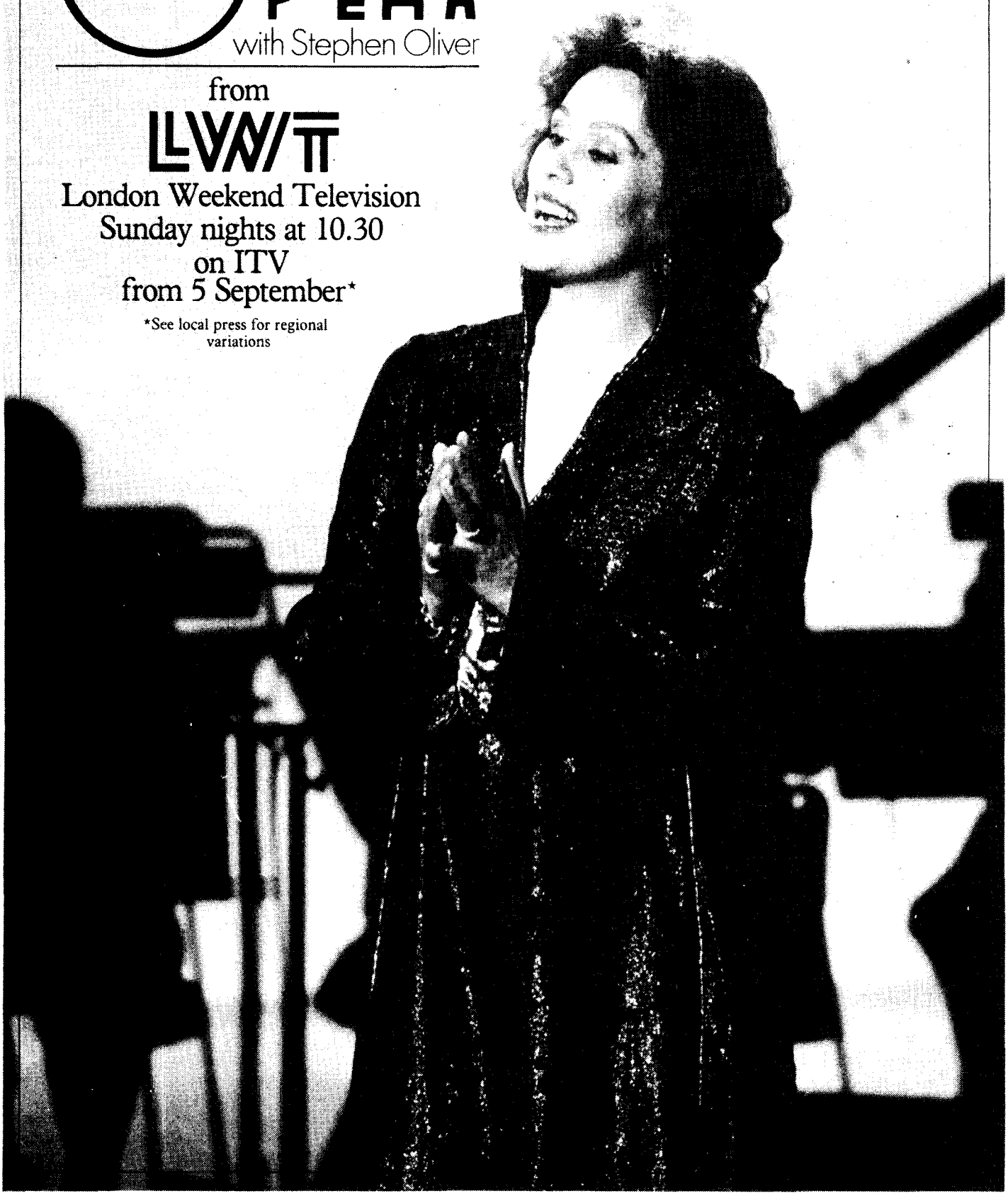



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nevertheless, granted a 99-year lease to the Ministry of Defence. As well as the hole itself, 27 acres will be used as a spoil dump during the construction period and a road for construction vehicles will cut through Park Wood. The dump and the road are ultimately to be removed and the land restored, but the Trust concedes that restoration of the meadow would be impossible even if an era of peace rendered the bunker unnecessary. A hydrologist who lives in the neighbourhood warns that disturbance of the water-table may inflict permanent damage on the wood.

The Trust's Council is a somewhat remote body, half elected at the annual general meeting and half nominated by related organisations. Of the one million members, who hold cards in order to visit Trust properties without paying, the great majority either give proxy votes to people active in Trust affairs or ignore the AGM altogether. The chairman, Lord Gibson (also chairman of the Pearson publishing group, ex-chairman of the Arts Council, and a Political Intelligence officer in the last war) can have had little doubt that the lease would go through quietly. The MOD issued invitations to contractors before information was given to the Council, let alone to members at large, and six months before the Council approved the lease.

An alert member, however, spotted the plans on the notice-board of Wycombe District Council. Letters appeared in the local and national press. Under the Trust's constitution, 500 members can demand an Extraordinary General Meeting. By May 1982, over 3,000 had put in their demands.

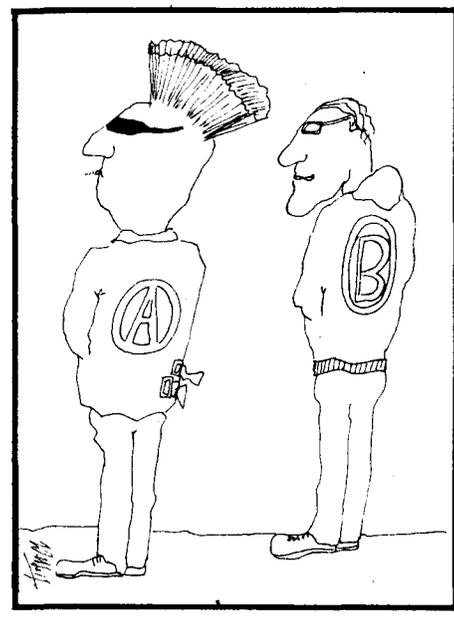
It was understood that the EGM would be called in September, but in fact it is to be held on 6 November, the same day as this year's AGM. As well as reducing the time for debate, this ensures that the proxies will be those already given for the AGM. Chances of passing the special resolution, which calls on the Council to rescind its decisions, are thereby diminished. But, to be on the safe side, the Council has distributed a leaflet beginning: 'An attack on the way the National Trust is run will be made at the EGM . . .'

Disingenuously, to say the least, this document describes the site as 'of poor landscape value', reduces the NATO HQ to an 'RAF communications centre', and argues that the pledges of land restoration could not be secured if the Trust appealed to Parliament and lost. (In fact, a fight by the Trust might have been backed by enough Tory conservationists to succeed.) It goes on to warn that the issue has become 'entangled' with arguments about 'national defence, nuclear disarmament and so forth' which are no concern of the Trust. It's true that some protestors – Mrs Audrey Urry, a Quaker lady who lives at Naphill, and George Hutchinson, professor of physics at Southampton – are CND supporters, and it's clearly true that the bunker creates a top-of-the-list target in nuclear war. But opponents of the project are scrupulously arguing their case in a National Trust framework. If 'inalienable' land can be thus cavalierly transformed in character, the accepted safeguards become meaningless and owners of beauty spots may well be deterred from future gifts. □

LABOUR'S PROGRAMME '82

# A, but not forgetting B and including C

Labour's Programme '82 is intended to form the essential route map for a future Labour government. In the next few weeks writers will be examining the theoretical basis of the programme. HENRY DRUCKER begins the series by looking at the party's attitude to democratic change.



Will Self

NOW THAT THERE ARE three sizeable political groupings in Britain, it is entirely possible that Labour will never again form a single-party majority government. At the moment it is more likely to come third than to win the next general election. *Programme '82*, offered to the Party by the NEC, hopes that it will 'represent the policies agreed to by the Labour Party for many years ahead'. But only if Labour forms a government. Suppose it does not: will the Party then have nothing to say to the poor, to the oppressed, to ethnic minorities, to women, to workers and the unemployed, to the elderly?

The usual cry is that Labour must not admit it might lose for fear of discouraging its supporters and making defeat more likely. There is small wisdom in that. The notion that we must pretend to ourselves, and to others, that we think we will win the next election serves too quickly to blind us to our responsibility to develop the extra-parliamentary arms of the movement to defend its principles and its interests.

For all its self-conscious fresh thinking, for all its search for new forms of democracy, *Programme '82* is tired stuff based on old habits of thought. It is part of a process of policy formation that made some sense when one could reasonably hope that the next general election could lead to a Labour government, which might then establish new – and possibly lasting – bastions for Labour and for social justice. Neither condition can now be depended upon.

If the Programme fails to move into fresh territory, one of the most obvious reasons is that it fails to occupy any territory at all. It is an amalgam. Working parties representing the relevant pressure groups were set to thinking about the various things a Labour government might do. Each of them worked in isolation. Each produced proposals which would improve public policy in its sphere. No one had the authority, or the energy, or the will to sit down with the various groups and say that such-and-such a proposal will not do for it is inconsistent with some other proposal being made by some other group. No one costed these ideas. There is little sense of priorities.

One has the impression of a political party which would like to offer everyone what s/he wants. That is nice. It beats Thatcher's determination to be hard on us all. But when A and B are incompatible they cannot both be promised. Simply 'A but not forgetting B' does not help the problem. And yet, *Programme '82* is littered with such question-begging phrases. What if: 'A but not forgetting B' turns out in practice to mean: 'Neither A nor B'? If the Party promised less now it might offend fewer later.

Another, hardly less important, reason why the *Programme* fails to move into fresh territory is that it is wedded, still, to statist notions of public action. First you capture power through a majority of votes and a majority of MPs, then you form a government and use the existing machinery of central government to transform the country.

It is true that the document does bow in the direction of 'greater accountability' (rarely could a concept have so quickly become a shibboleth, quite without definite content). It is true that the *Programme* has a long section about reducing the power of overweening bureaucrats, about controlling the security services and about open government. This is more than welcome. Citizens' rights of redress of their grievances against the state, especially a state whose powers are expanding – as Labour wishes – have been insufficiently protected by Labour in the past. Interestingly, too, the *Programme* recognises the Party's need to reach out beyond its traditional organisation to encompass the women's and ethnic minority movements. Here is another shibboleth – and it is precisely here that one hears 'A, but not forgetting B'.

If we are going to believe that Labour is



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serious about, say, open government, this time, we need a sober and honest analysis of why nothing was done about it last time. There is no hint of such thoughts in the *Programme*. There is a suspicion that the reason is simple: our leaders didn't really believe in it. Not believing in open government because they thought it incompatible with the other things we asked of them, they did nothing. If this suspicion is fair, they would do nothing again. Yet what they ought to do is come to the Party and say: 'You ask us for strong government action and you ask us to weaken the government machine. We can't do both. We think the former is more important. Open government can wait.' Many people in the Labour movement would agree with such a position. One could have more faith in documents such as *Programme '82* if they were based on such honesty. At least we would know what to expect.

Labour remains wedded to the notions of how to use the machinery of the state which it learned painfully in the first half of the century. Before the collapse of the General Strike of 1926 the movement emphasised self-reliance and the need to build its own strength, rather than reliance on parliamentary majorities. But the collapse of the Strike, and the fear of chaos within the trade union movement which it instilled in leaders like Ernie Bevin, had permanent effect. The genuine victories of the Labour Government of 1945 confirmed these lessons: the state machinery could be used and trusted by the Labour movement.

But the inadequacies of the two recent Labour governments have taught us bad faith. We stick to the old ways in our hearts. We still want to use the machinery of central government to right Britain's wrongs, while we try to kid ourselves that we have learned to do better since 1979, that we are all accountable democrats now. The faith is worst when it most matters: the party's commitment to local democracy and to devolution.

THE DEMAND of many Scots, and by no means merely SNP voters, for more autonomy for Scotland, was an example of the kind of anti-centralist pressure which Labour had been resisting. In 1974, largely for opportunistic reasons, Labour agreed to meet these demands. As a result the Scotland Act of 1978 was passed. The new *Programme* reiterates the agreement of 1974 but it is difficult to take it seriously on this point.

The subject of devolution occupies two paragraphs of the forty-third page of the 48-page *Labour Weekly* edition of the *Programme*. Here it is noted that a clear majority in Wales voted against the Assembly offered to the Principality by the Labour Government's Wales Act. The Party will accept that decision, says *Programme '82*. On the other hand, the Party is to re-affirm its commitment to devolution for Scotland . . . in the next sentence, however, the NEC distances itself from the commitment. It notes that the Party's *Scottish* Conference (emphasis in the original) has reaffirmed its wish for devolution to Scotland with strong powers to the Assembly. This Scottish wish is not endorsed. It is merely recorded. The *Programme* also passes over in silence the existence of a still valid Annual Conference resolution of 1976 committing the Party to devolution. Lugubriously it goes on to say that devolution to Scotland 'will have to be carefully examined in terms of its consequences for the machinery of government as a whole'. And that, of course, will take some time.

It is not necessary to labour the point. The NEC is only showing itself to be an accurate servant of the Party. If the Scots constituencies want devolution they might say so. Of the 518 resolutions submitted for the 1982 Annual Conference only one, number 504, is about devolution. There are three about animal welfare. Devolution is obviously not a central issue at the moment. But the attitude of the Party as a whole to its Scottish section is a test of its seriousness about curbing the power of central government. For however tiresome and self-interested the Scots and Welsh may be, they are the only communities within the United Kingdom who have any official right of self-expression within the Labour Party. The NEC's unconcern about the wishes of the Scottish Conference is more illuminating than it realises.

The Party's commitment to an autonomous local government sector betrays similar problems. If the Party really wanted to encourage diversity and break the uniformity imposed by Whitehall the obvious thing is to build up local government. The new *Programme* does contain the expected condemnation of the Tories for their destruction of local autonomy: 'The Tories have relentlessly stripped local authorities of their power to act as independent bodies responsible to their own electorates for their own decisions . . . Labour is pledged to reverse this process.' But when it comes to specific services the *Programme* is back at the old game of calling for further centralisation.

Speaking of education, for example, the document notes: '. . . increasing discrepancy in provision in different areas is undermining the concept of a national system. . . . We will consider giving the Secretary of State power to intervene when a nationally agreed provision . . . is at risk.' Housing, too, sees the Party backing both horses: 'Labour recognises that in principle local authorities are far better placed than Whitehall to judge local housing needs and the action which is needed . . . But we are also considering the merits of imposing some statutory minimum standard of public housing provision.' And when it comes to public transport an all-purpose sentiment is brought to bear which could be applied to any service: 'Labour believes that national guidelines must be established and funds made available to ensure that standards and services do not fall to an unacceptable level. We shall also take steps to ensure that local authorities fulfil their obligations in assuming the provision of at least a basic minimum of service to meet the needs of their areas.' So much for the mandates of local authorities.

The sensitivity the *Programme* shows to feminist issues and its willingness to promise to do something about them nevertheless illustrates the continued grip of the statist tradition in the party. There is a promise of a better deal for families, help for women to train and apply for better paid work and an offensive against low pay. We are even promised a new ministry for women headed by a member of the Cabinet. This is the party using Parliament to do something for women. These promises lead to two problems. First the reader has to decide if they are part of the 'A' or the 'not forgotten B'. Secondly s/he might wonder why the Programme is always citing Parliament as the means of doing something for women; why not help women to do something for themselves? Increasing local autonomy would be a big help.

But the greatest lapse, which makes clear beyond any doubt that Labour is not serious about democracy, about accountability or about decentralisation, is that *Programme '82* says nothing about the electoral system. Not a word. There is a debate going on in the country at the moment about the electoral system. One might have expected the authors of the document to be aware of this. What is Labour's position?

Not to have a position on a serious question affecting the heart of democratic procedures is revealing. It shows contempt for democracy. Without argument in public there is no democracy worth having. This point is made well enough in the Programme's section on Open Government. It is then forgotten the first time it becomes inconvenient.

Even if it were true that the Labour Party had a clear and unimpeachable interest in the preservation of the present electoral system (which it does not) this wouldn't be a sufficiently good reason for refusing to debate it.

We are good at remembering the lessons of the General Strike. Perhaps we should pay more attention to another event of the 1920s: the submergence of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party ceased to be an important party in the Twenties because it slipped into third place and then the electoral system destroyed it. Had there been a form of proportional representation history might have been very different. Who is in third place now? □

Henry Drucker, author of *Doctrine and Ethos in the Labour Party*, lectures in politics at Edinburgh.



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FOREIGN REPORT: COLD WAR

# A new 'gap' from Mr Weinberger

The US Defence Secretary sent a letter to 40 European newspapers to 'educate' us on nuclear matters. PETER PRINGLE replies.

SO the US Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, has a problem with the Pentagon's public relations. Newspapers, he says, have got the US nuclear war plans all wrong: they are not planning to win a protracted nuclear war they are just keeping up with the Russians. So, what else is new? Remember the 'bomber gap' and the 'missile gap' of yesteryear – those spurious 'intelligence reports' used to get more funds for the US nuclear force? Well, we now have the 'doctrinal gap.'

The Soviet Union, according to Weinberger, 'appears to be building forces for a "protracted" conflict (the doctrine of zatyazhnaya voyna)'. Therefore the US has to do the same. He sent a personal letter to the editors of 40 European newspapers to make his point.

We are entitled to be suspicious. Indeed, some doubters of Weinberger's interpretation of present Soviet nuclear doctrine are already on record as saying they have noticed the Kremlin – and the Soviet military analysts – moving away from protracted nuclear war doctrine in the last few years.

The Secretary of Defense is undeterred and he is at a loss to understand why we Europeans seem reluctant to take his conclusions at face value: he thinks we need a lesson in the theory of deterrence and so he gives us one in his letter. Then he concludes: 'There is nothing new about our policy. Since the awful age of nuclear weapons began, the United States has sought to prevent nuclear war through a policy of deterrence. *This policy has been approved, through the political processes of the democratic nations it protects, since at least 1950.*' (my italics)

This has to be one of the more ludicrous remarks of the nuclear age. It implies that the West's policy of deterrence through nuclear weapons evolved via the normal checks and balances of the democratic process; that there was a public debate in America, Britain and France over whether to hitch Nato's foreign policy to atomic bombs. That policy was conceived in the utmost secrecy from the beginning. There was no debate.

Since Mr Weinberger is into educating the public about nuclear matters – and we shouldn't reproach him for that – why not go back further than 1950? Perhaps because it doesn't quite suit his case.

On 10 September 1948, the National Security Council, the foreign policy-making apparatus in Truman's White House, produced a document, NSC 30, which was the basic policy statement of US atomic warfare. It was drawn up in the wake of the Czechoslovakian crisis and the Berlin blockade and formally recognised the US military's need to plan for the use of nuclear weapons 'in the event of hostilities' with the Soviet Union. It was quite explicit on the subject of public participation in this decision.

Paragraph 5 declared: 'Deliberation or decision on a subject of this significance, even if clearly affirmative, might have the effect of placing before the American people a moral question of vital security significance at a time when the full security impact of the question had not become apparent. If this decision is to be made by the American people, it should be made in the circumstances of an actual emergency when the principal factors involved are in the forefront of public discussion.'

Paragraph 7 continued along similar lines. 'Were the United States to decide against, or publicly debate the issue of, the use of the atomic bomb on moral grounds, this country might gain the praise of the world's radical fringe and would certainly receive the applause of the Soviet block, but the United States would be thoroughly condemned by every sound citizen in Western Europe, whose enfeebled security this country (USA) would obviously be threatening.' The document was stamped Top Secret and only declassified in the late 1970s.

The basic problem with Weinberger's letter is the same problem any official has in trying to explain the secret world of nuclear decision-making. There is too much information in the public domain now for us to be fobbed off with 'simple' (Weinberger's word) explanations of deterrence and of threats. The level of debate needs to be raised, Mr Weinberger, so that reasonable human beings can look forward to the hope, expressed by Robert Oppenheimer, in 1955: 'When, if ever, they (atomic matters) can be talked about openly, it will be a very different world, and to my way of thinking a very much better one.' □

**Caspar Weinberger**

Camera Press

SURVEILLANCE

# Spy scandal rocks Holland

Secret documents reveal the methods and priorities of the Dutch intelligence service. BEN BRABER reports

THE RELATIVELY LIBERAL image of the Netherlands is being dented by a determined campaign waged against the peace movement by the country's security and intelligence services. As the debate in the Netherlands over nuclear weapons has intensified, so agents of the Dutch security service, the BVD (*Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst,* the equivalent of Britain's MI5) has intensified efforts to plant informers and *agents provocateurs* in peace and nuclear disarmament campaigns. Remarkably, the BVD service – through the mouths of conservative politicians, and NATO Secretary-General Joseph Luns – has claimed that there is evidence that the Dutch peace movement 'receives its money directly from Moscow'. After making the claims, they set about finding the evidence to support them.

Through the recent revelations of collaborators or informers, and the removal of some military files from an Amsterdam command headquarters by an activist group – *Onkruit* – a considerable amount has become known about the activities of the BVD and other Dutch security agencies. Of particular interest to those in other NATO countries – including Britain – was the release of much material concerning biennial NATO-wide exercises called WINTEX, in which, among other things, military commanders practise suppressing



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Carlos Augusto: IFL

**Dutch NATO soldiers take part in an anti-nuclear demonstraton, 1981**

civilian dissent against NATO's military plans. The new information about the BVD and military security agencies revealed that:

- Members of parliament – including the previous Home Affairs minister in the social democrat government – have been targets of military security surveillance. The BVD appeared convinced that two other leading members of the Labour Party might be agents of the KGB. It had no evidence for this. But its officers made visits to the parliament building, and one of them was caught searching through the waste paper bins of a left-wing member of parliament.
- Infantry units have been rehearsed in projected wartime crisis operations against radical anti-nuclear-war campaigners. One exercise was code-named 'Black Palermo'. Similar plans were rehearsed in the 1979 NATO 'WINTEX' exercise.
- In October last year, a BVD agent attempted to have an informer elected treasurer of a leading peace group, and a communist party branch, to find out who gave money to the groups.

The latest action of the security services has been to arrest and imprison four member, including two leading officials, of the Dutch soldiers' union, the VVDM. They are accused of espionage, for handling a single document, said to be the floor plans of a new concrete bunker for NATO in the Maastricht area in the extreme south of the Netherlands. Their arrest indisputably arose through the telephone tapping of headquarters officers of the union, and many suspect that the whole affair was planned by the security services themselves as a smear on anti-nuclear groups which are prominent among officers and other ranks of the country's armed forces. The plans themselves were not marked classified, and were readily available to building contractors.

Two sets of documents have indicated that the BVD takes an extremely partisan view of politics, and is opposed to and spies on many politicians of the left. The first documents to be revealed are now known throughout the Netherlands as the 'PMC Papers'; they were taken by the *Onkruit* group from the headquarters of the Provincial Military Command (PMC) in Amsterdam – one of nine regional military headquarters, responsible for the administration of home military units. Other papers, obtained by a Dutch magazine, were training notes for future BVD agents.

Among documents included in the PMC papers were the notes of a military intelligence agent, Major de Boer, identifying prominent left-wingers who had apparently been under BVD surveillance. These included the former chairman of the Dutch Union of Journalists, a labour party minister, André van der Louw, members of parliament from the pacifist socialist party, and two left-wing journalists – one of them, Joop van Thijn, a relative of the Home Affairs Minister, Ed van Thijn. The BVD training notes, revealed two months ago, also included the government ministers André van der Louw and Ed van Thijn. As Home Affairs minister, van Thijn was supposed in theory to be constitutionally responsible for the BVD at the same time as it was branding him, in its training notes, a 'dangerous left-winger'.

This was not the first time during his ministry that the BVD and related military intelligence services proved to be operating outside government control. On 18 November last year, van Thijn told parliament that the security services would not be permitted to infiltrate the legitimate activities of the peace movement. But the very same day, a second lieutenant of the Dutch Maritime Intelligence Service, Jan Brouwer, attempted to recruit a former seaman in order to infiltrate a group of ex-conscripts who were planning to demonstrate in the major Amsterdam peace march a few days later.

The seaman pretended to go along with the recruitment, but he was secretly taping the conversation. During the discussions, Brouwer offered him a rich expense account in return for names of social democrat, radical, trotskyist and communist members active in different peace groups – and in particular the names of those in the organisation of ex-conscripts, Mobilisation '81. The normal fee for BVD informers is about 150 guilders (£30) a month, tax free. For a while, the former seaman, William Fles, became a double agent in order to find out more about the interference of the military intelligence services in Dutch internal politics. Then he exposed his recruiter who, soon after, was placed on a generous half-pay arrangement, like many other exposed agents. But there was no official reproach to the intelligence services, despite the embarrassment the incident caused the government.

LIKE MANY other security agencies in the West, the BVD adapted in the late 1960s from a specifically anti-Communist mission to viewing the 'New Left' and Trotskyist organisations as its prime enemy. It focussed strongly on a radical left-wing youth movement of that era – Red Youth – and continued surveilling its members for years, neglecting to spot other, more material threats to Dutch state security – in particular the South Moluccan groups which became active and received worldwide notoriety after a series of hijackings in 1977.

One member of the former Red Youth movement, Aad van Wijk, a printer, was under surveillance for 11 years until 1981 – even through the organisation itself had disbanded in 1974. Three officials of the BVD had for years been watching him, from the first floor of a house opposite in the Hague. At the start of the operation BVD agents had told the 65-year-old lady who lived alone in the house opposite that van Wijk was a dangerous anti-Israel terrorist; they set up, and left installed in her front room, new lace curtains, telephone taps, parabolic microphones, infra-red nightglasses and other surveillance equipment.

They took particular interest, the old lady later revealed, in whether van Wijk might be having an affair with a secretary in the Interdenominational Churches Council (IKV), a religious organisation prominent in anti-nuclear campaigning. But van Wijk had no involvement whatsoever in terrorist activities, although prominent in the Hague in squatting and peace campaigns. Throughout the 11 years, the old lady was paid several hundred guilders every few months, while one BVD agent's wife, who worked at a department store, would regularly reserve for her sale items that she wanted.

The ultimate purpose of organisations like the BVD, or Britain's MI5, is to identify and – in a crisis – neutralise by internment or other means opponents of NATO. The documents taken from the PMC headquarters indicated that legal staff were called up during NATO's WINTEX 79 exercise to rehearse legal moves which included the suspension of civil rights throughout the Netherlands, press censorship, and internment. They found detailed floor plans for one school which would be requisitioned and used as a censorship centre. Another document indicated that in the event of disturbances interfering with military activities, United States forces in the Netherlands would be allowed to take 'such measures as the US Commander thinks necessary to 'suppress' the unrest. □

*Additional reporting by Duncan Campbell and Sanne van der Toorn.*



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CHINA

# More rights to violate

JONATHAN MIRSKY examines the new constitution which will be put to this week's Congress of the Chinese Communist Party

ONE VERY HOT afternoon last month in Gansu province, near the western-most extension of China's Great Wall, I asked three young college lecturers what they thought of the draft of China's new constitution which the 12th Party Congress will ratify this September. All Chinese have been directed to study the draft but only one of my friends had heard of the document and she hadn't read it. Indeed, during a month in Inner Mongolia, Gansu, and Xinjiang provinces, in tightly-packed railway carriages and crowded hostels I met few who had bothered to read the newest version of the rights and duties of every citizen of the People's Republic.

It remains one of the mysteries of Chinese political life why the Communist Party pauses now and again in its internal strife to issue new constitutions. The fourth since the 1949 founding of the People's Republic, and the third in seven years, this one guarantees anew a galaxy of civil rights of which no Chinese has ever been certain.

The draft 'defines the nature of our country and the status of various classes', according to Peng Zhen, vice-chairman of the constitutional revision committee, who observes that under the new constitution 'China's citizens will enjoy more rights than under a capitalist system'. The existing 1978 constitution, which will be superseded within a month, and was once described as a 'major event in the political life of our people', has now been dismissed as 'hurriedly drafted and irrelevant'.

The Chinese authorities have drawn special attention to the changes in national administration. The State Chairman, or Head of State, will reappear. Stipulated in 1954, the office was abolished in 1975 after being held by Mao Zedong and then by Liu Shaoqi, whom Mao deposed in 1967. When appointed, the State Chairman will promulgate new laws, ratify most senior positions, receive foreign dignitaries, and award medals. A military council, with its own chairman, will direct the armed forces.

The 50,000 communes, the Maoist cornerstone of the agricultural economy, which were recently hammered in the Party's Resolution as one of the Chairman's early 'errors', will lose their administrative functions; these revert to the towns, as specified in the 1954 constitution and the move will accelerate the growing independence of Chinese peasants (see *NS* 9 July 1982).

Article 30 of the new draft hints strongly that Taiwan and Hong Kong can become 'special administrative districts'. Peng Zhen has underlined this possibility during recent weeks, seeking to reassure anxious entrepreneurs in China's lost possessions, that their economic prosperity could continue under 'one state, two systems'.

An independent accounting office, the first for over 30 years, will attempt to deal with the rampant corruption in official life, some of whose beneficiaries are now appearing in the dock all over China.

But the most important difference in the new draft constitution stems from last year's Party Resolution, with its fundamental dismissal, in effect, of Mao's contribution after 1956 until his death 20 years later. Hailed as supreme in all things in previous constitutions, and named five times in the preamble of the 1978 version, Mao is mentioned just once in the current draft. And unlike its predecessor, which considered 'continuing the revolution' the main task, the draft calls on all Chinese 'to carry out modernisation', a reflection of the Dengist priorities which prompted one official to explain: 'When a policy works, we call it socialism. Those that fail, we call capitalism.'

Past constitutional rights to put up wall posters and to strike no longer exist, a reflection of the leadership's astonishment at the public outpourings during the short-lived 1978 Peking Spring, with its Polish style calls for Party reform.

As for personal rights, these have always been trumpeted in the People's Republic – and always denied. In 1957 a bold professor had written to Mao that 'an untold number of citizens' had perished in illegal detention. He was soon proclaimed a 'vicious Rightist'. Since then millions of Chinese have suffered at the hands of the State. Party Chairman Hu Yaobang has estimated 100 million during the Cultural Revolution alone. Hundreds of thousands have died. There may be sceptical smiles when Chinese read the draft's Article 40, which promises compensation to those illegally treated by the State. How do you receive compensation in the after-life?

Chinese citizens can be imprisoned for several years without public trial, quite outside the provisions of the 1980 Criminal Code. A large number of women are now in a Shanghai detention centre, for instance, because they had sexual relations before they were married. Nor are sexual peccadillos the only route to 'labour under the supervision of the masses'. Every significant figure in the short-lived Democracy Movement which followed Mao's death is now behind bars; most are there without trial. All have been charged with violating an earlier equivalent of Article 27 of the new Constitution, which prohibits – without defining – 'treasonous and counter-revolutionary activity'.

One of them, Liu Qing, has been inside since late 1979 for publishing the transcript of the trial of another dissident, Wei Jingsheng, one of the stars of Democracy Wall who maintained that without democracy China's modernisation would be meaningless. Just before he disappeared into the Chinese prison system, from which he later smuggled a lengthy diary, Liu Qing demanded that a security official tell him which laws he had violated. With a crowd of Liu's supporters listening, the officer replied: 'We arrest whom we want to, that's what'.

In China today it is not the Constitution but the Party which bestows and removes rights and favours. As Deng Xiaoping declared last year 'everything decided by the Central Committee and Party organisations must be obeyed until further changes are announced'. □

**Chairman Mao: mentioned just once in China's new constitution**

*Camera Press*



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WEST GERMANY

# Following Lucas

TONY CATTERALL on converting arms factories to alternative products

ALARMED BY the growing dependency on the manufacture of armaments at the Hamburg ship-building and engineering firm of Blohm and Voss, shop stewards set up a working group at the beginning of last year to look into expanding its range of civilian products.

They took their cue from the Alternative Corporate Plan produced by the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards' Committee in Britain, but the immediate catalyst was a demonstration by workers in nearby Kiel aimed at persuading the Bonn Government to allow their shipyard to build submarines for Chile. The Blohm and Voss men were repulsed by the thought of West German workers wanting to build armaments for a fascist regime.

There were pragmatic reasons, too. Seventy per cent of the company's turnover is accounted for by the building of frigates and components for the Leopard tank, with roughly half of the workforce depending on this for their jobs. The working party noted that 'Armaments jobs are extremely dependent on short-term political decisions. They fluctuate heavily on account of uneven domestic demand and unstable international markets.'

Domestically, *Bundeswehr* procurement programmes for such major items as Type 122 frigates and Leopard tanks are due to end in a few years' time, and the money is just not there for new large-scale programmes. Exports have been running well – with turnover last year being at least DM2.5 billion – and West Germany is in fifth place among arms exporters, after the US, the USSR, France and Britain. But demand is falling, so much so that, in May, Bonn felt the need to relax its regulations on exporting arms to 'sensitive areas'.

Blohm and Voss is one of the companies that is feeling the pinch and is putting about 2,000 of its workers on short-time working. For the shop stewards, this is confirmation of their earlier analysis.

When the stewards' working party presented its initial report to management a year ago, it was totally rejected. The management was absolutely certain that the arms boom would be prolonged, and was not interested in producing such things as equipment for environmental protection and commodity recycling, or capital goods needed by Third World countries. Even the idea of getting back into the construction of power stations – where the working party says Blohm and Voss still has employees with the required expertise – was discarded.

Now, however, union officials say that management has begun serious discussions with the working party on how some of the ideas can be put into practice. One specific project under discussion is a ship-borne wind power station. According to its inventor, a seven-megawatt station would cost about DM10.5 million – compared to about DM28 million for an equivalent-sized nuclear power plant – and he is already having talks with the Schleswig Holstein electricity-supply authorities.

If the project does go ahead, then one of the Blohm and Voss shop stewards' objectives will have been reached: safeguarding jobs. But union officials say it is too early yet to know if management can be completely persuaded away from armaments.

The attempt has brought some criticism from other unionists, who have accused the working party of running a think-tank for management instead of debating the whole question of the armaments industry from a political angle. Some say this is syndicalism and that union activity on the shop floor alone cannot possibly solve the problem.

That may be true, say the Blohm and Voss shop stewards: but at least they are trying to do something. □

DENMARK

# Curing torture

RON RIDENOUR on the opening of the first medical centre for victims

A GROUP of doctors in Denmark will shortly be opening a medical centre for victims of torture, the first such institution in the world. Led by Dr Inge Kemp Genefke, a neurologist, some 50 medical workers at Copenhagen University Hospital have treated Chilean refugees and others over the past 18 months. Their new project will draw from this experience, as well as from eight years of Amnesty International medical missions, to examine subjects and verify that torture has occurred. The Danish doctors will care for 200 to 300 patients yearly and train doctors from other countries. Dr Genefke estimates it will cost approximately $1 million a year to operate a staff of 20, including five doctors and psychiatrists. The Social Democrat-led Danish government has pledged $120,000 of that.

Treating torture victims takes up to five times the time to treat other sick people with similar diseases, the Danish doctors have learned. They have treated Spaniards, Greeks, an Indian woman and others during the last decade and are the first doctors to systematically study and treat torture victims.

'Most of our patients have had severe headaches and other psychic trauma, and physical wounds, which we usually have been able to cure', Dr Genekfe said. One such case was that of an Indian woman, Archana Guha, a school principal, imprisoned for three years under the first Indira Gandhi regime. Although she was uninvolved politically, books by Karl Marx and a biography of Lenin were found in her house, when it was searched in 1974. She was subsequently jailed and tortured. Guha became bedridden, crippled from the waist down. A new Indian government acknowledged officials' role in the affair and she was granted permission to travel to Denmark under the auspices of Amnesty International. After several weeks' treatment, she was able to walk again. □

SRI LANKA

# Youths may hang

UPALI COORAY reports on the arrest and trial of young Tamils

TWO SUPPORTERS of the Eelam movement in Sri Lanka, which is campaigning for a separate state for Tamils in their traditional homelands in the north and east of the island, have been sentenced to death for allegedly killing a policeman. The conviction of these two Tamil youths – Kuttimani and Jeganathan – was based on confessions extracted by the police while the boys were being held in army custody, because the evidence of the only 'eye witness' was riddled with contradictions.

In the past, rules of evidence have not permitted prosecuting lawyers to use confessions made to the police or army. However, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act 1979, such confessions are admissible; the same act allows suspects to be arrested and detained without trial for 18 months in any place the minister of defence may decide. Kuttimani and Jegan were arrested in April 1981 and held incommunicado until a habeas corpus application was filed and the state was ordered to produce the suspects in court. After a long delay the suspects were produced.

These two youths, as well as others who were held in custody and summoned to give evidence at their trial, gave vivid descriptions of the manner in which they were tortured. They said that they had been kicked, hung by their legs and made to inhale the fumes of chillies; iron rods had been inserted into the anus.

The trial judge ruled that it did 'not appear probable' that Kuttimani and Jegan had been assaulted. Since most people who have had any dealings with the Sri Lankan police know that it is common practice for them to use violence when interrogating suspects, and since a number of Sinhalese people have died in police custody due to the injuries inflicted on them, the judge's findings cut little ice with Tamils.

Even the judge admitted that the youths had been held 'in a secluded and lonely place' and that they had had 'no access to friends, relations or lawyers'. Furthermore 'they were kept amid armed as well as unarmed soldiers. They would have been unaware how long they would be detained'. He concluded that in such circumstances 'the question will arise that even if there was no physical harassment, a statement made by a suspect in these circumstances would be irrelevant' under rules of evidence. But he said that the Prevention of Terrorism Act did not allow him to make such a ruling.

The youths have now appealed against their convictions and sentence. □



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# DIARY

## Bernard Crick

SOCIALISTS should not have holidays. We old *New Statesman* readers simply slip off for a few weeks with nothing said, like Badger in winter. Yet motor-camping is both easier in the States and relatively cheaper than at home. State Parks and National Forests are often free, never more than $5 a car-load, and all have spacious and shaded individual sites with camp-fire and iron cooking-grill – so unlike those sardineated British and French sites. With petrol still recklessly cheap and a Hertz car at $120 a week unlimited mileage (our 6,000 miles in three weeks should shake 'em), the costs compare well with touring in Europe – if one forgets or swallows the A.L. air-fares (After Laker).

○

It is usually more comfortable too, I assure my fellow members of the Savile Club (the Garrick blackballed me, and only for calling Lord Vaizey a 'Wilson Peer'). Some of the National Parks and National Forests press their ecological fervour ('Forbidden to Feed Chipmunks' and 'Do Not Step Off Trails') into bodily mortification, but after torment by cold tap and Elsan by Grand Canyon we're still talking about the Dead Horse Ranch State Park, Arizona, with its solar-heated showers and constant hot water. The real point of Arizona, though, is Indian archaeology, the substantial remains of the 12th and 13th-century pueblo buildings of the Hopi and Zuni: sites like Keetseal, Betakin, Tuzigood, Mesa Verde and the misnamed Montezuma's Cave are all steep-terraced, cellular apartment buildings, built in the mouth of tall but shallow sandstone caves in the Mesas or Buttes, thus shaded from the high summer sun but exposed to the winter sun. The descendants of the original inhabitants are now also officially preserved. I don't know enough to judge either the merits or the efficacy of these preservationist policies. But the innocent eye reveals a terrible problem for the tourist to ponder and pass by.

○

The question of bread looms large to the European tourist. Why do even affluent Americans endure such soft, cotton wool, honey-sweet, artificial, 'extra-goodness added' rubbish? It makes Mother's Pride taste like *baguette*. Don't believe American intellectuals who tell you that good bread is now common; they must come from Manhattan, polite Boston or the suburbs of Washington, DC. Out on the road it is junk. Yet one must distinguish between junk food and convenience food. Bottolled Tomales, individually wrapped in greased paper ('Throw Away Before Eating'), are convenience, not junk. So camp-cooking is both easier and more variegated. But America always tempts and then ambushes the generaliser. James Bryce once said that the first time he visited America he was full of generalisations, but after his second trip he threw them all into the Atlantic (that's one of the troubles with flying).

○

We had just come down an Arizona mountain from 'Jerome: Founded 1902. A Living Ghost Town' (the mineral source of Churchill's mother's fortune). We struck Cottonwood, 'Population 3,654, Elevation 5,680 ft', but the gas-pump hand told us that the last grocery had just closed, a year after the last copper mine. Most of Cottonwood had moved on or were on food stamps. But then we saw 'Mount Hope Foods Naturally' which sold real bread, a health food shop of Greenwich Village or Hampstead ilk. Perhaps the prices as well as the ideology led the garage-hand not to count it as a 'grocery store' (they didn't take welfare food stamps). The explanation was the living part of ghostly Jerome; fine old, decaying 1900s frame-houses have been bought cheaply by artists (though natural food was more evident than art), just like Cornwall. After all, the D. H. Lawrence Ranch at Taos was not far down the road, 'Maintained by the University of New Mexico and open to visitors'. Next time.

○

Also Aquasanti's cafe sold their own good bread and did allow meat and beer. There are some snags in American camping. When I spoke in the toilet a stranger said: 'You's British. I want to tell yer we were all rootin for yer in yer little war, we sure was'. Tom bristled but did not bite and I nodded gravely while the cock crowed thrice. And when Olly strummed his guitar three German girls joined us and sang Irish folk songs, but they did tell us of Aquasanti. It is the only one of Paola Soleri's great visions of ecological and de-automobilised cities to get off the drawing board. At the moment it is a kind of modernistic building site as 40-odd volunteers toil away to turn the present capacity of 90 into a desert city of 5000, perhaps by the year 2000.

The inspiration appears to be purely architectural and ecological. A degree of self-provision is practised, but no foolish ideas of self-sufficiency; the trustees appear to make the big decisions and the residents the little ones, so no communitarian or ultra-democratic ideology either. If there is a 'hidden curriculum', I suspect it is pretty whoosy. The guide said that 'one of our inspirations in the reconciliation of science and nature is Pierre Chardin', but a quick question (to the embarrassment of the boys) shattered his patter and revealed that he didn't know that Chardin was a dead Catholic theologian.

I wonder if our humble contagion of pedestrian precincts are a watered-down version of Soleri's great visions? Sometimes an inch is only gained by overreaching. And Soleri cools and heats his 'pueblo' just as the 12th-century Indians did: shaded in summer, open to the sun in winter. Time-scales are complex. Orwell was not the only revolutionary to be a traditionalist.

○

Soon I'll be back jogging in Camden again, just like Roy Hattersley, though I think I know where I'm jogging now-a-days. *She* has made a socialist of me again. And why do Americans put up not just with such bread but with, bar a few great exceptions, such radio stations and newspapers: no news of the outside world has filtered through to us in three weeks. Is *she* still there? Is *he* still holding us together? How's the baby? Are the brothers restive? Is a Bayswater medium still relaying to *him* the commands of Stafford Cripps from the spirit world? Does it all still go on? I'd rather stay on the road, hard-travelling hopefully.

ROGER WODDIS

## A kind of flagging

The People's Flag is raised once more,
Though not as high as heretofore,
And those remaining in the fold
Are still inclined to feel the cold.
Then raise the standard just a shade
To reassure the underpaid.
While faith and party funds are low,
We'll sort of wave it to and fro.

Our voices, be they large or small,
Will bravely ring from wall to wall:
Come Brighton dark or Blackpool grim,
Together we shall sink or swim.
Then raise the flag an inch or two
Above the unemployment queue.
We shall not flinch, nor feel bereft,
Whatever tendency is left.

# THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ Impresario Brian McDermott yesterday called off his hunt to find the Right-Wing answer to all those Left-Wing playwrights. He cancelled his contest for the best play by a Right-Winger, leaving the £500 prize unclaimed. After reading 150 plays that were entered he declared: 'They were all useless. They would have been boring 20 years ago.' – *Daily Mail* (Russell Holmes)

☐ A claim by the Labour Party in Scunthorpe that a successful Social Democratic candidate in the May council elections distributed free plastic carrier bags from his market stall bearing the letters SDP in the party's blue and red colours during his campaign is being investigated by police. Mr Cyril Nottingham, a former Labour mayor of Scunthorpe who won the Crosby town south ward for the SDP by 41 votes at the May elections, claims that the letters on the bags stand for 'Special Discount Prices'. – *Guardian* (John Filer)

☐ Council tenants in Easter Compton, near Bristol, have been promised full consultation before their homes are demolished. Northavon district council's housing committee has recommended demolition of the 12 houses due to subsidence. Any demolition of the houses would be phased because the council knew the tenants were keen to stay. – *Evening Post* (Pat Van Twest)



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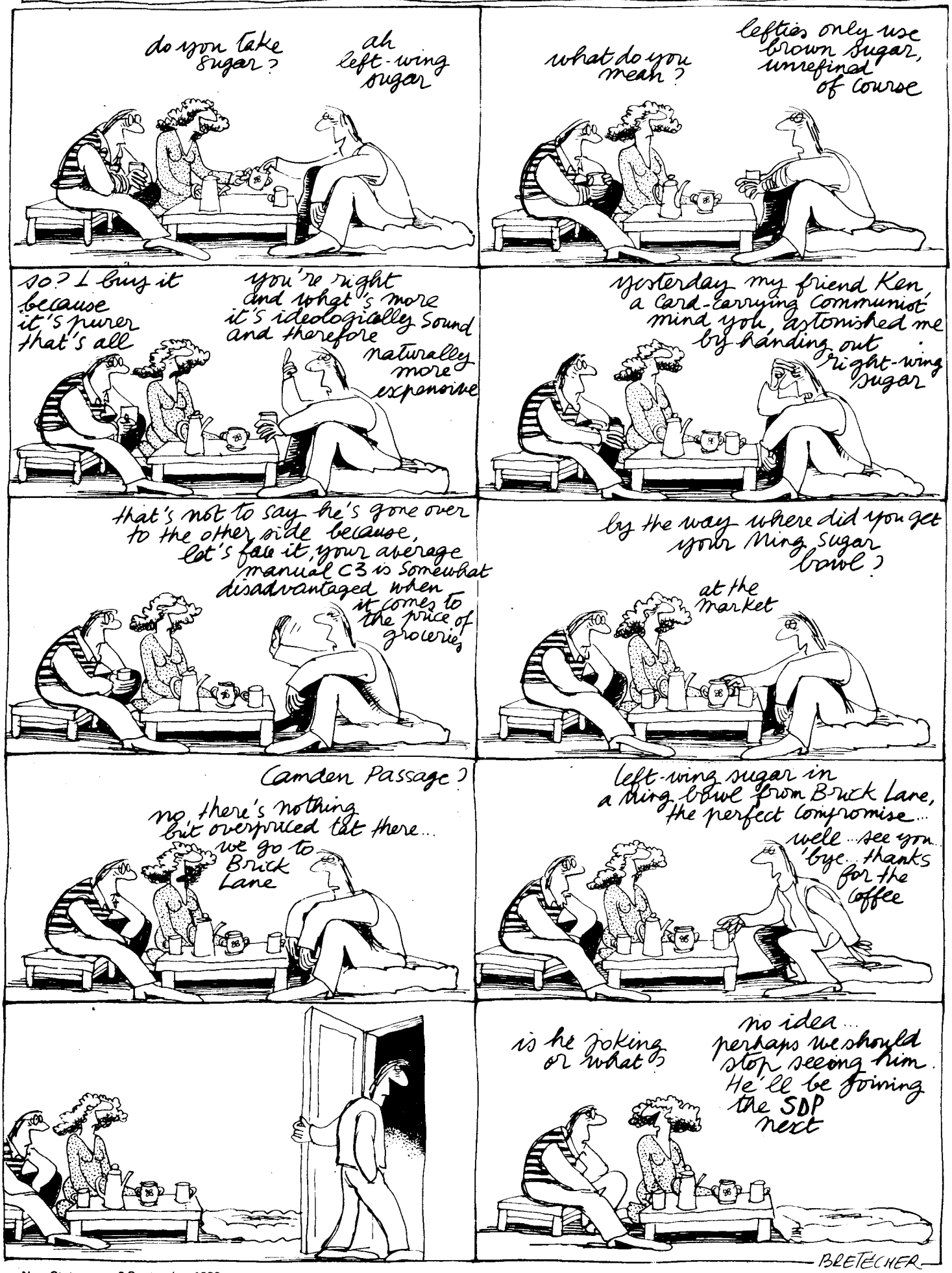
# BRETECHER

## ANGRY YOUNG MAN



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# LETTERS

## Sharing the experience of unemployment

*David Foxton, Centre Co-ordinator, Leeds Trades Council Unemployed Centre, Leeds 2*

Philip Clayton (*NS* 20 August) appears to be as confused as the TUC itself as to what to do about the unemployed. It is not particularly surprising; the TUC are locked into free collective bargaining and the unemployed into an isolating and confusing maze of welfare benefits. The unemployed of the '80s are much more isolated than their '30s counterparts; there are no direct punitive measures by the Boards of Guardians and no supportive working-class communities to fight against them.

TUC centres need to recognise this lack of community and begin to build a shared experience of unemployment among their users. This helps give people confidence in their fights with the DHSS and may lead into more active campaigning. The unemployed do not see this as political, and they would not call it such themselves – they are mostly despairing of politics as they see it. The non-party political guidelines not only help us get vital MSC funding but let these people know that it is they who use the centre and not vice versa. The people who need the centres and whom we need to reach are confused working (or ex-working) men and women who do not have worked-out political theories. Their use of the centres has more to do with their self-recognition that they are unemployed rather than whether the centres are run by the unemployed themselves.

There must be organisation, certainly, and this is something that the Regional TUCs are beginning to look at, but it has to be organisation *by* these

unemployed *with* the centres and the trades union movement they represent, rather than an elite of political activists. This is a long process but it is only by linking up with those still in work that the unemployed can gain strength.

## Postal ballots

*Peter Fairbrother, Dept of Sociology, University of Warwick*

Patrick Wintour's article (*NS* 20 August) drew attention to government proposals (and SDP plans) to control unions by introducing postal ballots for the election of union executives and officials. He correctly points out that the claim that this is a sufficient condition for a democratic union is a hollow one. There is, however, another and more fundamental argument about postal ballots which Wintour does not mention.

The argument for postal ballots rests on an assumption that trade unions consist of individuals and as such all members have a right to receive and mark a ballot paper (preferably at home). In practice, this results in a procedure whereby union members vote as individuals, often on the advice of a hostile media and management, and anti-union colleagues.

But the problem with postal ballots is more than procedural. Although union members may exercise power in a postal ballot, this is power without responsibility. Members have no necessary control over their elected representatives and their representatives are not necessarily accountable to them. Thus union members are effectively disengaged from their unions. Through union organisation they are encouraged to restrict their union activities to the marking of a ballot paper.

More than this, if the principle of postal ballots in unions is taken to its logical conclusion, then all decision-making should be done in the same way. Unions should be organised on the basis of referenda alone. The result would be disaggregation, division and eventually demobilisation. Without being too cynical, this is what some advocates of postal ballots want.

Against this, it is necessary to emphasise the fundamental principle of union organisation and action, namely collectivity. In this respect, the hallmarks of union policy-making and election are meetings and collective action, discussion and debate, collective decision-making and representation. Members participate as part of the union collectivity and through participation are collectively responsible for their actions and the actions of others. The onus is thus on unions to provide for the fullest possible participation by members in collective decision-making and election.

The argument about postal ballots is not about democracy as such, but about trade unionism itself. Rather than provide the conditions for individual disengagement, unions should be organised for collective participation. This means that union representatives should be controlled by and accountable to the membership as a collectivity. It also means that union policies should be made by the membership as a collectivity, at meetings and the like. In this way, the notions of democracy and responsibility, participation and solidarity will come to have force.

As a footnote, I would like to point out an error in Wintour's article where he refers to the commissioned studies of NUPE and the SCPS. In both cases they were undertaken by members of the Department of Sociology, University of Warwick, and not by members of the Industrial Relations Research Unit.

## Balancing act

*Alexander Kirby, 31 Ashness Road, London SW11*

Thank you for your report 'FO Bombards Schools' (*NS* 6 August), and for its revelation that the Foreign Office is using inertia selling to introduce to schools its material on nuclear weapons.

Earlier this year the Foreign Office sent me, unsolicited, a copy of a wall-poster it publishes, entitled 'Arms Control and Disarmament' – the self-same one, I suspect, that it is sending to schools. I wrote to ask how the poster arrived at the military balance in Europe which it purported to depict (and which showed NATO at an appreciable disadvantage to the Warsaw Pact). I have now received a reply.

The Foreign Office says that the source of the 'balance' is the Statement on the Defence Estimates 1982. I'm not so concerned at the fact that in the transition from Statement to poster 180 NATO medium-range missiles have simply vanished – though I'd still like to know what happened to them. What really bothers me is the Foreign Office's statement in its letter to me that 'the figures shown under the military balance in Europe refer to the weapons and forces concerned in the negotiations described in the text above the chart: the conventional forces in the Central Region covered by the [Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction] talks'.

Obviously, therefore, the poster doesn't show Britain's own nuclear forces, which the Government has said 'are not relevant' to the Geneva talks. Equally obviously, the poster does not and cannot show the military balance in Europe. Why is the Government so anxious to convince teachers and schoolchildren that it does?

## No heretic

*Dr Jeremy Bray MP, House of Commons, London SW1*

I am surprised at the ground on which Henry Neuberger attacks the SSRC for cutting the Cambridge Economic Policy Group's grant (*NS* 20 August).

First, it is wrong to identify the modern practice of econometrics just with David Hendry. He would be the first to point to the contributions of Durbin, Sargan, Johnston, Wallis and Deaton among British econometricians. Of these Hendry has perhaps given the most attention to how the economy works. But none of these place the model above the purpose of modelling. As for institutions, CEPG has done no work which compares with Hendry's or Johnston's.

Second, CEPG is a byword for its model adjustments before forecasts. It uses only annual data, and makes only one major forecast a year. Yet each year before its forecast it has made model adjustments. The latest account of its central hypothesis (*Cambridge Economic Policy Review*, April 1982) produces yet another rabbit out of the hat, with a graph showing how well their latest equation predicts changes in private expenditure – after the event. With no less than 3 explanatory variables, and six assumed numerical coefficients, this fitting over the data is scarcely remarkable. It says little about capacity to predict the future.

Third, if, as Henry Neuberger says, equations are nearly always modified when they are used in the Treasury, where he gained his experience, then that only underlines the backwardness of econometric practice in the Treasury and other UK model teams in failing to model expected errors.

Finally and most damaging, the abdication of any relevance of objective evidence to testing economic theories opens the door to such mischiefs as monetarism, to which indeed the central hypothesis of CEPG is closely related. The intellectual collapse of the old Keynesians in the face of the monetarist challenge is partly due to their inadequate command of technique. I am surprised that Henry Neuberger wishes to brush that aside.

The identification of Labour policies with the quite inadequate methods of CEPG has been damaging. By playing its proper role in maintaining standards, the SSRC has put an end to that, while allowing CEPG resources to pursue their genuine insights, without the drag of a task they cannot handle.



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# The Prudence Farmer Award

The Prudence Farmer Award is given annually for the best poem, in the judge's opinion, to have appeared in the *New Statesman* during the previous twelve months. This year the judge was MICHAEL LONGLEY, who has chosen 'The Insect House' by John Levett, published in the issue of 14 May, 1982, and here reprinted. John Levett's first collection will be published next spring.

BETWEEN July 1981 and June 1982 the *NS* published over seventy poems. After a preliminary skim through the bundle of photocopies I was pleasantly surprised that so many were familiar or had even left a lasting impression. I then proceeded to read through them all several times, wielding a purple felt-tip pen in schoolmasterly fashion, and allowing ticks of approval and pleasure to accumulate on those poems that might eventually make up a short list.

Some distinguished practitioners whom I greatly admire submitted sturdy work. Anthony Hecht's 'The Book of Yolek' (25 June 1982) approaches its terrible subject awkwardly, with a proper reticence:

> We're approaching August again. It will drive home
> Haunted imaginations of that camp
> Yolek was sent to, his small, unfinished meal,
> The electric fences, the numeral tattoo . . .

But at the risk of impertinence I would say that this poem moves me less than his earlier commanding elegies for victims of the Holocaust. In 'Among the Whins' (29 January 1982) Seamus Heaney slyly colonises the imagination of Chekhov in order to control characters and events in Donegal that might otherwise be too close to home: 'the whins/That smelt of confidences'. But the poet is really disguised as himself, his own translator. Douglas Dunn's 'December' and 'Pretended Homes' (28 May 1982) commemorate his wife in a tumult of image and detail: 'Reality, I remember you as her soft kiss/At morning.' The urgent enjambements, especially in the second poem, suggest a grieving compromise between improvisation and obsessive inventory, a rush to capture 'A poetry of rooms spun from her heart.'

Several less ambitious poems more nearly attain finality of form. I would single out Sarah Lawson's 'Going Up in the Eiffel Tower' (28 August 1981), which ends well, except for 'greenly':

> We watch the Champ de Mars greenly sink
> And Paris pop up like cardboard
> In circle after circle of substitute horizons,
> As though our motion upward
> Makes ripples in the very Paris streets.

Another poet new to me is Stuart Henson who also knows how to finish on the right note. Here are the last three lines of his sonnet 'Digging' (25 September 1981):

> A robin in the hedge where he had hung
> His jacket flourished its red badge to make
> The broken earth a bargain for its song.

## John Levett

## The insect house

This artificial darkness is more real
Than any country midnight. One by one
Attendants throw the switches that reveal
The glass walls of each case, an Asian moon,
  And taped along the violet edge
  Of warm, exhaustive privilege
The thermostats displayed like silver spoons.

Within this careful landscape of placed stones
And salt white sticks the insects are at large.
We listen for the click of absent bones,
Watch for dissimulation, camouflage,
  Beyond our vision movement lies
  Immured in motionless disguise
And folded in unguessable montage.

Kafka-like each wing case and each husk
Emerges from the body of the scene,
Folds back again as moist, electric dusk
Bathes each vagrant gesture in a clean,
  Receptive, almost milk-white coat
  That purifies yet leaves remote
The surface of each fitful, lifting seam.

Your palm damp in my palm, about to leave
This base line of existence, we're aware
Of how the shifting twilight can revive
These introverted privacies of fear,
  We flicker darkly on the glass
  And brighten into sudden mass
And flare as sunlight shoulders through the door.



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In 'A Written Answer' Tom Paulin parodies the style of an examinee and strikes a warning note for anyone who, like me, is involved in the Northern Irish literary scene:

> His use of metonymy is pretty desperate
> and the green symbolism is a contradiction,
> but I like his image of the elm and chestnut,
> for to me this author is a fly man
> and the critics yonder say his work is alright.

Does this make it more or less difficult for me to record my satisfaction with the efforts of Paul Muldoon and Medbh McGuckian, two disturbing and often baffling talents (23 April 1982 and 11 December 1981)?

Also included in my short list was a group of four poems by Michael Hofmann (27 November 1981). He is clearly a young poet of considerable intelligence and elegance. The voice of authority rings from his lines, but I don't quite understand how it got there. I am impressed but unmoved. Hofmann's obscurities make me feel stupid in a way that McGuckian's do not. Like Tony Harrison he is inclined to wear the title *doctus poeta* as a lapel badge. Unlike Harrison he does not – as yet – produce heart-stopping lines like those of 'Background Material', one of four sonnets from 'The School of Eloquence' (30 October 1981). In this elegy for his parents Harrison brilliantly captures the ghost of himself glimpsed in two photographs:

> in his, if you look close, the gleam, the light,
> *me* in his blind right eye, but minute size;
> in hers, as though just cast from where I write,
> a shadow holding something to its eyes.

Moments like these tempted me at first to award the prize to Harrison. But I can't make up my mind about his often plonking iambics. Are they being used ironically, a butch disguise that allows the poet to manage tender material? Or are they just clumsy?

> You'd've been embarrassed though to meet
> your God
> clutching those poems of mine that you'd like
> banned.

Hugo Williams's 'Walking Out of the Room Backwards' (26 February 1982) also nearly walked off with the prize. One of three elegies for his father, the actor Hugh Williams, it ends unforgettably:

> To punish me
> or amuse his theatrical friends,
> my father made me walk out of the room
> backwards
> bowing and saying, 'Goodnight, my liege'.

But perhaps the rhythms here and elsewhere in the poem are too easy-going.

'The Insect House' (14 May 1982) is the first (and so far the only) poem by John Levett that I have read, though it is clearly far from being the first poem that he has written. Skilfully made, abundant yet controlled, it is a beautiful example of what can still be achieved with metre, rhyme and stanzaic shape. The poet sets himself formidable problems, and although he solves them triumphantly, he insists both as formalist and as celebrant that there are no easy ways into or out of 'the insect house'. I am very pleased to choose this poem for the Prudence Farmer Award. □

**RUSKIN:** Nick Shrimpton

# Right to work

**Studies in Ruskin** edited by R. E. RHODES & DELIVAN JANIK *Ohio* £15.75

Was Ruskin a socialist? If that question sounds an academic one, it has an unusual urgency about it. Up and down the country there's many a local Labour Party with its headquarters in a Ruskin Hall or Ruskin House. Trade unionists and working-class mature students come to Oxford to study at Ruskin College. When the 29 MPs who constituted the first significant Labour Party presence in the House of Commons, in 1906, were asked by a newspaper to name the works that had most influenced them, Ruskin's *Unto This Last* was nominated more often than any other.

Yet now, just as the British Left finds it politic to rediscover its indigenous and non-Marxist roots, a new generation of Ruskin scholars is calling the whole association into question. The divergence of views became dramatically apparent at a conference organised by the Victorian Society at Leicester University in 1977. An audience accustomed to think of Ruskin as a sympathetic radical of the democratic left reacted with acute discomfort to papers suggesting that it was mistaken, and recovered its equilibrium only when Quentin Bell arrived to reassert the traditional view.

Bell, as it happens, is a comparatively cautious spokesman for the Ruskinian status quo. He is prepared to take quite seriously Ruskin's description of himself as both 'a Communist' and 'a violent Tory of the old school', to explain that paradox by reference to a common hatred of economic liberalism, and to place the theory that results in Marx's dismissive category of 'Feudal Socialism'.

Other commentators have been less scrupulous. When Joan Abse published her biography of Ruskin in 1980, her desperate wish to make the views of her subject square with her own opinions (absorbed from Harold Laski at LSE) led her to rewrite his texts. 'Soldiers of the ploughshare, not soldiers of the sword,' she tells us, 'was his already proclaimed motto'. Ruskin's actual phrase, as it appears in both *Unto This Last* and *The Political Economy of Art*, was significantly different: 'Soldiers of the Ploughshare as well as Soldiers of the Sword.' This was no pacifist, but a man quite prepared to see his ideal society (an oligarchic and paternalist police-state) export its values at the point of the bayonet. When Governor Eyre of Jamaica was dismissed in 1866 for indiscriminately hanging, shooting and flogging native rioters, Ruskin was quick to join the campaign for his defence. Addressing the cadets of Woolwich in 1869, he could even be found hinting at a military coup should the commercial middle-classes or the newly enfranchised workers get too uppish.

This recognition that the phrase 'Soldiers of the Ploughshare' implies not merely the regular payment but also the quasi-military organisation of working men is, however, an uncomfortable one, and it has become possible only because of the careful work that has been done on the sources of Ruskin's thought. Seen in their real context, rather than in vague association with contemporary European socialism, the ideas become altogether clearer. Van Akin Burd is the distinguished American scholar on whose indispensable editions of Ruskin's letters and diaries such analytical work is based. It is therefore appropriate that the most exciting contribution to this collection of essays in his honour should be an unprecedentedly clear statement of the new understanding.

ROBERT Hewison's 'Notes on the Construction of *The Stones of Venice*' is all the more attractive for being a frank recantation of earlier views. In 1976, in his book *John Ruskin: The Argument of the Eye*, Hewison was as keen as anybody on the image of Ruskin as an ecological social democrat. Now he engagingly confesses himself mistaken, and does so by placing Ruskin in the precise political category to which he, like his father before him, belonged. The Ultra-Tories arose in the 1820s as a conservative faction determined to fight Catholic Emancipation, Reform Bills, secularism, individualism, *laissez-faire* and threats to the agricultural interest. A clear line, Hewison suggests, can be traced from such early associations to the views expressed in *Unto This Last* and upheld by Ruskin's own (and still surviving) political party, the Guild of St George. Nothing else in *Studies in Ruskin* is as striking as this, though James Dearden has contributed a characteristically impeccable bibliographical examination of *The King of the Golden River*, Elizabeth Helsinger assembles some interesting formal parallels to *The Stones of Venice* in early 19th-century travel literature, and David Sonstroem writes suggestively about the tension between visionary and literal procedures in *Modern Painters*. Nothing, that is, unless one pauses over a particular detail in Masami Kimura's survey of Japanese interest in Ruskin. Kimura is concerned to state that the link is based on a misunderstanding. But the fact remains that in the Japan of the 1930s Ruskin was 'hailed as a totalitarian social reformer, and some of his doctrines and assertions were picked up and specifically made use of to support the imperialist war by the right-wing nationalists'.

Having seen him placed in such unsavoury company, why should we still be interested in this peculiar Victorian polymath? What makes his particular kind of well-intentioned authoritarianism different from the other brands available? The answer, if there is one, lies in the ends which Ruskin wished his totalitarian means to serve. William Blake expressed a wish that all the Lord's people might be prophets. Ruskin, similarly, wanted all the Lord's people to be artists, and he proposed to achieve this end, not by a socialist redistribution of wealth, but by a Ruskinian redistribution of labour. Inequalities of income, in other words, seemed alto-



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gether less important to him than the fact that some people get all the interesting and fulfilling work to do. In his ideal society everybody would wash pans or dig ditches. At the same time, however, everybody could also be (however humbly) a Turner or a Tintoretto. Few dogmatic social thinkers have had so clear, or so sophisticated, a conception of the good life which their reforms will make possible. All socialists should read him and benefit accordingly. But they'd do well also to read *Studies in Ruskin,* and realise that they're travelling with an Ultra-Tory. □

**POLAND:** Gustaw Moszcz

# Misrulers

**The Polish Ordeal** by ANDRZEJ SZCZYPIORSKI *Croom Helm* £7.95

'Gomulka bad, Gierek worse.' Such an Orwellian slogan might serve as a summary of Szczypiorski's highly personal analysis of 37 years' misrule in Poland. The personalities of Gomulka and Gierek dominate his bitter reflections about the nation's mismanagement since its forced conversion to Soviet-style government after 1945. Blending personal history with wider interpretation, he deals with the major turning points of post-war Poland. The book does not give many clues to events after December 1981 and might be faulted for lack of detailed, empirical data, but its judgments will surely meet with wide agreement.

Novelist and journalist by profession, Szczypiorski imaginatively reconstructs the mood, atmosphere and emotional flux inside Poland over recent years. The best chapters are those dealing with the differences between Gomulka and Gierek. Szczypiorski's balanced appraisal shows why Gomulka remained an attractive figure for so long – until he assisted in the murdering of shipyard workers in the Baltic in 1970. His old-style Bolshevik puritanism, backed by inordinate self-confidence, seems admirable by comparison with Gierek's self-seeking, cynical opportunism.

Gomulka saved private agriculture, tolerated the Catholic Church, and was at least politically consistent. Gierek ruined private farming and vacillated over every crucial issue until his team of mediocrities could come up with a glossy package of half-baked ideas.

Given Gomulka's philistine boorishness, this preference is like choosing strychnine over cyanide, but within Poland it makes sense to think about choosing between two evils. However, Szczypiorski's view that in 1956 Poland 'chose' Gomulka rather than Stalinism is questionable, since it could be argued that Gomulka was the concealed choice of the Soviet Union. This Gomulka-Gierek comparison clearly indicates the poverty of Poland's official political life. The country has now emerged with the worst of both their regimes, and the 'ordeal' has become a long protracted punishment.

A note of high-sounding idealism permeates Szczypiorski's book; like some elements of Solidarity, he stumbles into a kind of moralising language which leaves as many questions unanswered as otherwise. After reading this book, one might be left with the impression that Poland's only problem is finding leaders who are not mendacious villains with undersized brains. That *is* a problem, but not the only one. Unable to resist knocking down the aunt-sally figure of Gierek whenever an opportunity arises, Szczypiorski doesn't offer much positive suggestion about alternative feasible routes for Poland's leading political force, the PZPR. He fails to probe the system for its endemic weaknesses, while throwing out tantalising hints as to what they might be.

He also adopts a hectoring tone whenever he considers the attitude of the West towards Polish affairs. Admittedly, the West does have a dim record on Poland (although is it really true, as he claims, that before August 1980 the *New York Times* and *Le Monde* had printed nothing on Poland for 30 years?). Szczypiorski, however, makes an unsupported assumption that the West understands very little about Eastern Europe.

His tendency to go for the oversweeping remark is also evident in his grand claim that Poles 'know' the Soviet Union much better than any other nation; try telling that to a Ukrainian or Lithuanian nationalist. He thinks it absurd to discuss Eastern Europe as a whole, to which the answer, given the common factor of Soviet dominance, must be 'it depends how it's done'.

Still, such carping points don't detract from the authenticity of this book, coming as it does from a writer who struggled free from Sachsenhausen only to be briefly imprisoned again at the age of 61 by a more refined fascist dictatorship, that of General Jaruzelski. *The Polish Ordeal* is a valuable contribution to the advancing understanding of the specifics of Polish politics, even if, these days, it is difficult to foresee a time when the country's leadership will turn from worse to better. □

**BIOGRAPHY:** David Harounoff

# The alternative

**Shimon Peres** by MATTI GOLAN *Weidenfeld* £12.50

In May 1977 the Israeli electorate was faced with a crucial dilemma. Was the next Prime Minister of Israel to be the pragmatic and taciturn intellectual, Shimon Peres, or the Proud Jew who does not 'kowtow to the world's leaders' and is invariably 'swept into the outer spheres of rhetorical ebullience', Menachem Begin? According to Matti Golan (author of the gripping *Secret Conversations of Henry Kissinger)* they were to 'wreak the greatest political upset the State of Israel has known since its establishment'. They chose Begin.

Peres and Begin were not simply the respective leaders of the Labour and Likud Parties, but the contrasting symbols of two distinct cultures. The first inspired by Tolstoyian agrarianism and democratic socialism, the second by the robust urban nationalism of the Zionist Revisionist movement. Put more crudely, the intra-Zionist political struggle has perennially centred around those who grow and those who throw tomatoes.

PERES's suitability as leader of the Israeli labour movement has been in question since April 1977. Aspersions on his moral integrity are continually flung by former Labour Premier Yitzhak Rabin, and Peres has always been publicly dwarfed by the oratorical verve of Begin. Matti Golan's splendid biography does much to bolster his maligned image. The author charts Peres's significant involvement as Ben-Gurion's protégé in the development of Israel's aircraft industry; his diplomatic breakthroughs with France and West Germany; and his imaginative proposals in seeking a solution to the ostensibly intractable Arab-Israeli conflict. Clandestine meetings between Peres and Jordanian, Egyptian and Moroccan leaders are unearthed and the machinations of the Socialist International, from which Peres has derived a formidable standing, are illuminated.

The picture emerges of a man with a marked propensity for generating political and military power though somewhat deficient in the ability to wield it. Shimon Peres is certainly not of the same calibre as his socialist predecessors, Ben-Gurion, Eshkol and Golda Meir – the 'Generation of Titans'. And most Israeli socialists are prejudiced against him for being the first and only Labour leader to lose elections to the Likud.

Peres remains, all the same, the only viable alternative to Begin, and Golan stresses the polar difference between them over fundamental policy. Whereas Begin admitted that he intended to rule the West Bank Arabs 'by the sword and faith', Peres has trenchantly maintained that 'we don't want to rule over a million Palestinians, for we have no desire to be a nation of overlords'.

In addition to presenting a comprehensive, piquant biography of his subject, Mr Golan gives an invaluable *tour d'horizon* into the intrigues of Israeli and Middle Eastern diplomacy. □

## Among this week's contributors:

NICK SHRIMPTON teaches English at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford.

ALAN HURST is the author of *Hardy: An Illustrated Dictionary.*

JOHN COLEMAN is on holiday. His film column will be back next week.

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**FICTION:** Bill Greenwell

# Novel tales

**Scottish Short Stories 1982** edited by JAMES CAMPBELL *Collins* £6.95
**Stories up to a Point** by BETTE PESETSKY *Bodley Head* £5.95
**Chronicle of a Death Foretold** by GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ *Cape* £5.95

When is a short story not a short story? *(When it's a tall tale? When it's insufficiently novel?)* This Carrollian riddle has either no answers, or as many as you care to invent. As it should have: there are four familiar statements about 'the short story' which I would rather see dispensed with, instead of dispensed. Thus, *it is an unpopular form*. No, not especially. It flourishes in the common (and probably Garden) magazine, and has a secure place in radio schedules. More likely, its writers are left less limelight. *It is a more demanding form*, or there again, as James Campbell claims in his preface to **Scottish Short Stories 1982,** *it is more difficult to write successful ones consistently than it is to complete a decent novel.* Surely, no, and no again: it is merely a different form, and consistency must simply be temperamental. Saki was never Novelist; Robert Coover's shorter fictions consistently outweigh his novels. Would William Trevor, master of both, find the one more *difficult* than the other? Is he, like Faulkner – whom Campbell cities – a poet *manqué?* Unlikely; and even if true, it would say nothing about the relative strengths or hazards of length.

Not that Campbell hasn't my sympathy. The anthology preamble seems obligatory (his is neither apologetic nor defensive, as so often happens) and to him fell that happy, hapless task of opening this commendably pleasant selection. As he freely admits, the stories – to a lesser extent, even their authors – are not distinctively Scottish. But *Scottish Short Stories 1982* is a more usefully useless and attractive title than *The Ones That James Campbell, Hilary Davies and Willis Pickard Picked This Year,* which is, luckily, what happened. The stories reflect their editors' taste for the quiet, unostentatious, often comically laconic style; the sentences of authors and editors alike are carefully pronounced. Brian McCabe and Richard Fletcher respectively offer gentle parodies of a lovelorn, unpublished poet and an obsessively orderly academic – curiously, the necessary jolt is each time administered by an itinerant American girl. In most pieces, a challenge is met, and its consequences suffered or celebrated, James Kelman's *Charlie* an impressive exception. In the best, Bernard MacLaverty's *More Than Just a Disease,* a shy boy on holiday with cousins is given confidence to conquer not only an unsightly rash, but the whining precepts of his absent mother.

These honest, polished pieces conform – and here's short story statement number four, in case you thought I couldn't count – to Campbell's precept. *There is at least one general rule about the short story,* viz. 'there is one specific thing it should not be: a compressed novel'. But *Care by Women,* the best of Bette Pesetsky's **Stories up to a Point** is precisely this: a skeletal sketch of a marriage, the arrival, adolescence and later life of three daughters, their relationship with their mother, their father's desertion – he'd wanted a son. It is but nine neat pages long (sorry, *short).* That it could so easily be decked with flesh, knocked into an excellent novel, is irrelevant. The scratches on its surface are exceptionally skilful. This first collection, with its admirably ambiguous title, contains fifteen tight, slightly antiseptic snippets, concerned with the loss of a lover, love, or both. *Care by Women* is significantly the most striking, as one of only two told in the third person. Pesetsky's speakers, cool, almost emotionless, sound too improbably similar, too mannered to be individual. Fractured in form, some pieces are maddeningly insubstantial. To snatch at a point and miss is agreeably tantalising: not to glimpse one is, well, pointless.

In **Chronicle of a Death Foretold,** Gabriel García Márquez winds a simple thread into a shroud of seemingly implausible proportion. 30,000 words of sustained, inventive fiction, what is this? A short story stretched? We should turn for instruction to his earlier *In Evil Hour,* in which one Dr Giraldo has been read some Dickens by his wife:

> 'Is it a long short story?' she asked, after thinking about it carefully. 'They say it's a short novel', the doctor said, putting brilliantine on his hair. 'I would say, rather, that it's a long short story.' With his fingers he rubbed the vaseline into his scalp and concluded: 'Critics might say that it's a short story, but a long one.'

Excuse my deep breath. *Chronicle* is a short story; but a long one. Its opening sentences are characteristically arresting (too mild an adjective – Márquez has his readers under lock and key from the outset):

> On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar got up at five-thirty in the morning to wait for the boat the bishop was coming on. He'd dreamed he was going through a grove of timber trees where a gentle drizzle was falling, and for an instant he was happy in his dream, but when he awoke he felt completely spattered with bird-shit. 'He was always dreaming about trees', Placida Linero, his mother, told me twenty-seven years later . . .

The entire novel reconstructs Nasar's final hours, during which, it transpires, everyone in his small town becomes aware of his impending death. Indeed, the assassins announce it. The killers are twins, brothers to a rich outsider's new bride. Early next morning, news arrives that their sister was no virgin. She names Nasar as the culprit, although his guilt is never established. The gruesome murder is treated as a moral chore.

As a fable of that madness which only obscure principle can produce, *Chronicle* is hypnotic. But what fascinates further is the leisurely, almost desultory artistry with which Márquez extends an incident into an event. Readers of *The Autumn of the Patriarch* will recall his skill in sustaining and maintaining a theme, for the way its trellises of sentence support such plentiful lengths of vine. Readers of *In Evil Hour* (recently published in paperback by Picador) will recognise the brooding, fatalistic wit. And new readers will be captivated by the author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude.* All will also, far from incidentally, owe a debt of gratitude to Gregory Rabassa, the translator. I need no Spanish to tell how well the spell of the original is retained. □

**LETTERS:** Alan Hurst

# Hide & seek

**The Collected Letters of Thomas Hardy: Vol. 3 1902-1908** edited by PURDY and MILLGATE *Oxford* £19.50

The publication of Hardy's letters isn't making him any less elusive. He writes to his wife Emma, who has just fled to the Continent, to ask her to come home again in exactly the same flat, impersonal tone he adopts in a letter to his parlourmaid Bessie enquiring about the vegetables. Only Hardy could conclude a letter to his wife: 'The servants are very quiet, & attentive about the cats. A woman in Dorchester has murdered her baby. Yours T'.

This volume covers the period when the ex-novelist, now in his 60s, is making a literary comeback with *The Dynasts,* a strange epic verse drama about the Napoleonic Wars designed to be read rather than acted. Reading between the lines one senses Hardy's pleasure at being able to afford to write to please himself, despite his constant carping about critical disapproval.

Perhaps he hated writing letters just because they *had* to be written? There are some notable exceptions. His feeling creeps into letters to Florence Henniker (previously published in *One Rare Fair Woman,* 1972), and to Edmund Gosse. There is also a marvellous and expansive letter of condolence – the gem of the collection – to the Rev. Arthur Moule on the death of his brother Henry. A haunting description of the burial at Fordington and some simple reflections on friendship at last bring Hardy the writer into perfect alignment with Hardy the man.

Some letters show Hardy's canny dealings with publishers ('The Russians published a translation of *Tess* which had great vogue over there but they did not keep their promise to pay'), his workaday approach to writing, his struggles to evolve a philosophy, and much else of interest to scholars. Common readers, however, may lose patience with the relentless chronicling of ailments, the weather, or train-arrival times--unless they enjoy playing hunt the author. 'Dear Sir, My best thanks for your kind offer to me of a foresight of your typewritten romance. I am sorry to say however that I am suffering from an affection (sic) of the eye . . .' If you are not smiling by now you are recommended to take your Hardy letters Selected not Collected. □



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# Shorter reviews

**The Essential Mailer** by NORMAN MAILER
*New English Library* £9.95

The Muhammad Ali of literature, Norman Mailer has incited derision, anger, frustration and admiration more often, and in greater quantities, than any living writer. Inevitably, *The Essential Mailer* (a 586-page selection of his articles, stories, letters, plays and speeches) arouses the same emotions. The stories have been taken from the US collection *The Short Fiction of Norman Mailer*. The 'non-fiction' pieces (in so far as such a distinction is relevant to Mailer) come from *Existential Errands*, and range from Mailer's epic account of the Ali-Frazier fight to his mystical 'blood-wisdom' thoughts on Black Power, 'Looking for the Meat and Potatoes'.

'The faith of the revolutionary,' writes Mailer in the latter, 'is that the repressed blood of mankind is ultimately good and noble blood.' This is certainly Mailer's faith; although whether or not it is revolutionary is rather more open to doubt. Where it smashes against the establishment, capitalism or pollution, it has an unquestionable appeal. Where it opposes technological progress, it begins to smell of egotistical, adolescent Luddism. Where it denies the validity of any but phallic-procreative sex, it stinks to high heaven of self-absorption.

Mailer's concern with social issues is, in fact, what he would call a 'put-on': a free-form, never-ending confidence trick to distract the public (and probably the author) from the fact that his primary preoccupation is himself: his fear of creative impotence, of cultural redundancy. This is not to accuse him of any *deliberate* dishonesty; merely of being more intimate, more psychological a novelist than the scope and grandeur of his subject-matter would imply.

Besides, it is Mailer's ability to expand his personal obsessions into magnificent, global metaphors that forms the basis of his talent. And if his assault upon the boundaries that used to separate 'literary' writing from journalism, fiction from fact, art from artist, has megalomania as its cause, it has also opened literature up, given it a new, vital relevance.

**Harriett Gilbert**

**Law and Order: Arguments for Socialism** by IAN TAYLOR *Macmillan* £15 & £4.95

Ian Taylor's thesis is quite simple: one of the reasons for the Conservatives' victory in 1979 was their unchallenged monopoly of the law'n'order issue; in order to succeed next time Labour must make it a socialist issue. Taylor faces up to some hard truths. Right-wing criminology is in the ascendant because the Tories have linked it to real, legitimate fears and concerns of working-class people. The debate has largely been won by this Tory populism because Labour, almost by default, became the anti-police anti-crime control party.

Taylor argues for the 'reconstruction' of socialist social policy and criminology in order to combat both right-wing criminology and social democratic theory (the essence of social democratic theory is the identification of pathological deviance whose 'symptoms' must be 'treated' by liberal, state-employed professionals). More than half the book is devoted to a brief but incisive survey of the terrain. Taylor demonstrates the inadequacy of simple oppositional analyses of the penal system, the police and the law by highlighting real tensions in traditional Left stances. For example, against police harassment of blacks can be set genuine instances of police action against racist violence.

There is a danger that Taylor's carefully considered 'socialist realism' will be seen as self-negating, offering at once everything and nothing. But the usefulness of his approach is that it helps to clarify the relationship between the 'fragments' on the Left and the Labour Party in this area. Even more crucially, it shows how law'n'order can become a vital part of a socialist programme, demonstrating en route that Thatcherism is palpably 'ineffective as social and penal policy'.

**Mark Benney**

**A Very British Coup** by CHRIS MULLIN
*Hodder* £6.95

'George', said the US President to the Director of the CIA, 'what have we got on the files for destabilising Britain?' The answer, apparently, was: not as much as the CIA should have had. Readers of this account of the destabilisation of a 1989 left-wing British Labour government will find the methods employed rather unsophisticated in comparison with real-life examples.

What makes the book interesting is that it is an attempt at visionary 'faction' by the new editor of *Tribune*, who is also one of Tony Benn's two chief lieutenants. The argument runs: suppose a Bennite government is elected in, say, 1989. What happens next, particularly since that government is committed to the removal of US bases and nuclear weapons? How do the American and British Establishments fight back?

This is a strong theme, and one which could undoubtedly grip most *NS* readers. Unfortunately Mullin's characters are all too large for life, and he can't resist offering a stream of lefty in-jokes, which are fun but distracting. By 1989, for example, Trotskyism is illegal, and practitioners have been confined to the internment camps on Salisbury Plain.

*A Very British Coup* is not in the least convincing; nor, for that reason, is it in any way instructive. Still, it's a good read.

**Duncan Campbell**

**Fuelling the Nuclear Arms Race: The Links Between Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons** by SHEILA DURIE and ROB EDWARDS *Pluto Press* £2.95

This readable and thoroughly researched book treats in welcome depth a number of familiar themes: the early days of atomic energy in Britain, the international reactor trade and its proliferation risks, the secretive and authoritarian tendencies of the 'plutonium economy'. In detailed evidence and analysis, it shows conclusively that Britain's 'civil' nuclear industry has from the first served military requirements. The Queen, opening Calder Hall in 1956, proclaimed that Britain would now 'lead the way' in 'demonstrating the peaceful uses of this new source of power'. Over the next eight years, Calder Hall was, in fact, to furnish warheads for around 400 bombs.

Or so the authors estimate. Officially, at least 20 tonnes over-all of British-made plutonium, which we can assume to have been raw material for bombs, are simply unaccounted for in the figures. When Robin Cook MP asked about the provenance of fissile materials for the Trident warheads, he was told that 'it has been the practice of successive governments not to divulge details'. This 'practice', designed to obscure the links which Durie and Edwards lay bare, no doubt accords with the wishes of those in the nuclear industry who are already rather touchy about its image, and who recently decided on a characteristic move to calm public fears: Windscale, you will be relieved to hear, is shortly to be renamed 'Sellafield'.

**M. H. Ryle**


**Negotiating development:**
**Labour relations in Southern Asia**
*by Johannes Schregle*
This book attempts to project the East-West dialogue, the discussion between Western society and its culture, and Asian approaches into the labour relations scene, i.e. the area of co-operation and conflict between employers and workers and their organisations. The author, who has followed Asian labour relations for over 20 years, explains why labour relations patterns of Asian countries, which concentrate their efforts on economic and social development, nation-building and self-reliance, can not be the same as in western countries from which labour relations institutions had originally been transplanted to Asia.
ISBN 92-2-103026-1 (hard cover) £11.40
ISBN 92-2-103027-X (limp cover) £8.55

**Workers' management in Yugoslavia:**
**Recent development and trends**
*Edited by N. Pasic, S. Grozdanic and M. Radevic*
This comprehensive survey is based on a draft by Yugoslav authors of the structure, operation and problems of the system of workers' management which now permeates all aspects of Yugoslav life. It is particularly based on a law of 1976 and related constitutional changes. The work includes statistics of workers' management bodies and their members, a number of case studies to illustrate the working of the system in undertakings of various kinds, and particulars of the role of socio-political organisations and other organs outside the undertaking. A special effort has been made to present the information in terms that will be readily understood by English-speaking readers.
ISBN 92-2-103034-2 (hard cover) £10
ISBN 92-2-103035-0 (limp cover) £7.15

**Unemployment in France, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands:**
**A survey of trends, causes and policy options**
*by W. van Ginneken in collaboration with M. Garzuel*
This monograph examines three groups of factors: those affecting the supply of labour, such as the 'baby boom' and the increased labour force participation of women; those affecting the labour market, such as mis-matches between skills and between regions; and a group of so-called 'macro-economic' factors which include labour and capital costs, the impact of technology and the changed pattern of domestic and international demand.
ISBN 92-2-103032-6 £5

**Workforce reductions in undertakings:**
**Policies and measures for the protection of redundant workers in seven industrialised market economy countries**
*Edited by Edward Yemin*
The ILO has been closely concerned for a number of years with the development and applications of measures for the protection of redundant workers. Experts in Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States were invited by the ILO to describe policies and measures applied in their countries for the protection of workers affected by workforce reductions, and their papers are set out here. They are preceded by a comparative survey of the legislative and other measures for the protection of redundant workers in the seven countries in question.
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**ARCHITECTURE:** Jules Lubbock

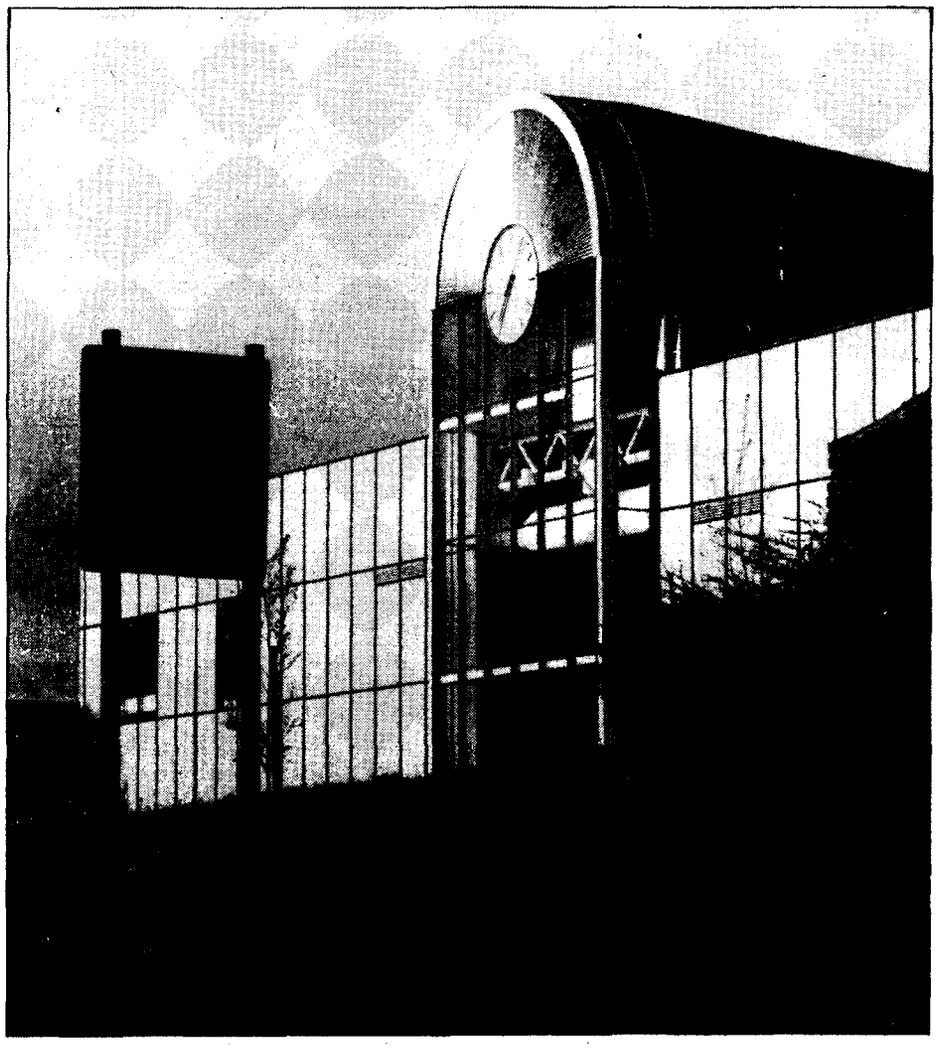
# Was it really necessary?

IN 1936 Chester le Street provided hospitality for the Jarrow Marchers on the first stop of their crusade; today, with male unemployment at 40 per cent, it has become the Jarrow of the 1980s, worse hit and less well publicised than nearby Consett. Yet the town was founded as the capital of Northumbria 1100 years ago when the Bishops of Lindisfarne, fleeing the Danes, established themselves among the rubble of Hadrian's fort with the relics of St Cuthbert and the treasured Lindisfarne Gospels. A century later the Bishops retreated to Durham. Chester le Street was consigned to anonymity, poverty and unemployment; in Defoe's words, 'an old, dirty, thorowfare town', but notable, even then, for the finest sea coal, which enriched the Earls of Durham and Scarbrough. The Scarbrough seat, Lumley Castle, redecorated by Vanbrugh in 1728, still commands the town. In Chester le Street's mining heyday there were six collieries. Only one survives.

What little publicity the town has recently received has not helped it. In 1973, Andy Cunningham, who had moved there to a bungalow provided by Sid McCullough, a local contractor subsequently jailed, was accused of rigging the nomination of the GMWU's research officer, Giles Radice, at a by-election caused by the death of the last miners' MP. McCullough's partner, Councillor Urwin, arranged T. Dan Smith's first major PR contract with the building firm Crudens in 1961. Fitzwalter and Taylor in their brilliant account of the Poulson story, *Web of Corruption* (Granada, £12.50), claim that it was the one local authority where Smith could count upon obtaining a Compulsory Purchase Order. So much for the town's previous association with architecture.

A new Civic Centre has just opened there, a shining edifice of steel and glass which looks like the Crystal Palace in miniature, and seems to epitomise the clean Chester of the future, in contrast to pits and gasworks. It has been featured as the cover story in the architectural glossies and praised for creating a new style in town-hall architecture – unstuffy, open, efficient, communal and caring.

A vaulted mall, with the town clock on its facade, forms the spine and straddles a former footpath. The idea is for people to continue to use the mall as a short cut, so that government is seen to be open. The mall, which is kitted out in high-tech 'Habitat' with exposed air-conditioning, primary colours and gigantic potted plants, is also the meeting-place for the people and their representatives. Included in the public amenities are an exhibition conservatory and a cheerful restaurant, which can be booked for private functions. These areas form a cross in the corners of which lie the offices and council chambers. Two large single-storey, open-plan, or Burolandschaft offices with the senior officers' rooms located on a bridge above them, are supposed to provide a creative and democratic working environment.



The old offices were scattered between four houses on the main street. The decision to centralise was taken in the Sixties, but delayed till three years ago, when the council wished to act quickly to forestall Heseltine's axe and rapid cost-inflation. Using an efficient contracting and construction system completion took less than two years, cost £100,000 less than the £3.2m budgeted, and provided work within the region. The architects, Faulkner-Brown and Partners of Newcastle, consulted closely with the building sub-committee, chaired by a senior Labour councillor with representatives from opposition parties, and with senior council officers and the GMWU. The model was exhibited for public comment in the libraries.

Such was the theory. But buildings themselves never tell lies. For a start the Civic Centre is situated in a residential district almost on the outskirts, and well away from the main street where the former Treasurer's department, an early 19th-century Grade 3 listed house, has been demolished for a development site to defray the costs. So the mall is hardly the busy urban thoroughfare it is supposed to be. In any case, people walk around the new building, not through it. Within, there is nothing innovative about asking a receptionist to call an official from his lair – the mall serves the traditional lobby system. In this case the Chief Executive's office and the council rooms are particularly well-protected, deep in the corners, as far away as possible from the mall. The restaurant, a nice place you would think to discuss one's problems over a cup of tea, is, in fact, restricted to officials during office hours. The Council Chamber is windowless. With sloping roof and sleek continental furniture in purple upholstery it does not fail to evoke the appropriate decorum. The Burolandschaft offices with senior officers surveying their subordinates from the bridge embody a curious form of democracy; indeed the original concept was compromised at the request of the senior hierarchy, proof that architecture in itself cannot change existing social structures. The cost indeed fell within budget, but that was, nonetheless, 'at the higher end for purpose-built offices'; with a million quids' worth of furniture and interest payments it will come to £7 million rather than £3.1 million. Finally, the local opposition, which includes members of the Labour Party, alleges that the decision to go ahead was never debated before a full council or in ward meetings.

FOR all that, it is not an ugly building and it answers well to the purpose for which it was designed – prestige offices for a centralised Town Hall. But it is simply not community architecture. It was not conceived in an altogether open, democratic



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way, nor does its internal planning either incorporate or reflect openness. As its facade suggests, it is a closed building, as forbidding in its way as Lumley Castle, as a UFO, or a nuclear shelter, so dubbed by the townspeople. In fact the basement is blast-proof, and was designed to fulfil Home Office requirements for a fifth-tier post-nuclear protected administrative headquarters. There was strong opposition from the Council to a recent screening of *The War Game*.

What possible good can this edifice do for the town? Certainly it raises a set of major issues for architecture. If architecture is 'the art of shaping space around social institutions', then the more actively a traditional local authority is involved as a client the less chance there will be of new forms of architecture emerging. Some authorities want decentralisation with local town halls and maintenance departments on housing estates. That is a step towards community architecture and open government. Chester le Street went in the opposite direction, and never seriously considered the alternative of rehabilitating the old decentralised offices.

The current vogue for discussing architecture purely in terms of style and visual delight deflects attention from commodity and firmness. Yet here is a building that is commodious, firm, and to some tastes, delightful as well. It has aroused local hostility not because it is modern, but because it is out of place, and because people do not feel that they were adequately consulted. A still more fundamental precondition of good architecture was ignored: architects never seem to ask their clients, 'Is building really the best solution to your problems?' Civic pride, vested interests and the belief in construction as the import-free panacea for economic woes bolster this indifference. Here is a test case. The new town hall provided employment in the region, but was a single resident of the town taken off the register? Most materials were British, but the most advanced component, the thermal roof, was imported. Furniture commonly accounts for 25 per cent of total costs. But no British manufacturer designs modern furniture appropriate to this style of building, so it too had to be imported. Hence a £12bn boost to construction could result in at least £2-3bn of additional imports. In this respect Britain is caught in the same trap as underdeveloped nations who try to modernise.

I would dearly like to believe that the image of technological efficiency and the publicity will attract new industry to Chester le Street, or even the 40,000-square-foot hypermarket projected for the site of the demolished Treasurer's Department. The long sad tale of prestige construction in the North East suggests otherwise. With two adjacent enterprise zones and Consett down the road, Chester le Street's prospects remain grim. The landlords extracted the coal and have moved their capital elsewhere leaving the people on the dole. The District Council may have fine intentions, though little power. But surely £4 million cash and £3 million interest could have been put to a more productive and imaginative use – financing workers' co-operatives maybe? □

**MUSIC:** Andrew Clements

# Storming heaven

IN THE spring of this year Emil Gilels gave an all-Beethoven recital in the Festival Hall that was marked down by many who heard it as one of the finest of all piano recitals, an unrepeatable matching of artist and material that was as glorious as it was unexpected. But Gilels is the kind of pianist who always promises to deliver performances of comprehensive profundity; in recent years his playing has acquired a further layer of intellectual penetration to accompany an already phenomenal technical control. His coupling of Beethoven's *Eroica Variations* with the piano sonata Op. 10 no. 3 for Deutsche Grammophon (2532 024) recapitulates most of these qualities, and at the same time gives a glimpse of Gilels as a merely mortal interpreter, still capable of turning in a performance that is ordinary. The sonata is the unremarkable side of the disc, a beautifully crafted account certainly, with unfailing liquid tone. Yet it is almost careless in its treatment of some of the crucial moments, allowing *rubato* to take on unappealing mannerisms and sometimes inflating the music with a quite false late-romantic grandiosity. The Variations, on the other hand, sweep everything before them; thankfully the digital recording is able to reproduce the extraordinary dynamic range of Gilels's playing, from the heaven-storming opening to the whispered confidences of the quieter variations that suggest aspirations towards the deeper truths of the late piano sonatas. There are moments, perhaps, when Gilels threatens to overwhelm what is still after all early Beethoven, yet the conviction behind what he does with the music is enormously exciting and consistently bears the mark of great piano playing.

The *Eroica Variations* seem to have done well by the gramophone; but the larger and more famous progeny, the *Diabelli,* has been recorded surprisingly infrequently in recent years. Daniel Barenboim's new version (Deutsche Grammophon 2532 048) is not likely to upset anyone's existing preferences though it offers considerable refinement; the urgency and inevitability that characterise Gilels on the previous record would be invaluable here. Barenboim's view of this greatest of all variation sets is comfortable, never disturbing; he responds well to its moments of humour and to the introspection of the slower movements, but the physical involvement which some of the strenuous piano writing implies finds him aloof and bland.

In Chopin this lack of a hard, definable centre to his playing is more easily disguised, and in the Nocturnes especially, of which Barenboim has recorded an integral set (Deutsche Grammophon 2741 012, two records), a small sample would probably reveal mainly finespun lyrical lines and an accurate sense of the dimensions of each miniature; only after longer exposure do doubts begin to grow. It is once again in his limiting of the music's emotional range that Barenboim falters; an unwillingness to extrapolate beyond the confines of the notes on the page or beyond the most decorous colouring and inflection makes these accounts predictable long before the end of the fourth side is reached. Barenboim is now less an explorer than an expositor, and consequently the less interesting as a pianist; one hopes that he will learn to live dangerously again.

When great pianists do turn their attentions to unlikely music the results are uneven though never uninteresting. Claudio Arrau is not the most obvious choice for a relatively early Schubert piano sonata such as the A major D664 (Philips 9500 641), and there are moments in his version that are likely to enrage the more staid Schubert lover. In place of the rapt purity that Richter or Solomon brings to this sonata on record Arrau introduces disquiet, turning autumnal reflection into uncertainty. Such a view could hardly be recommended as a first choice for this work, but it provides a disturbing antidote to more traditional performances.

A second disc of Schumann from the young Russian Youri Egorov allows me to make amends for a less than charitable review here of the first, containing *Kreisleriana,* a couple of years ago. Where that debut recording seemed to me only to provide evidence of dazzling technique, the present programme of *Carnaval, Papillons* and the Toccata Op. 7 (EMI ASD 4202) amply demonstrates that a keen intelligence directs those fingers. Egorov is still inclined to approach problems head on, but the excesses of exuberance in *Carnaval* are now tempered with the exquisite delicacy of some of the quieter episodes; the concept of a kaleidoscopic series of impressions could not better be conveyed.

A performance of Tchaikovsky's first piano concerto from Philips (6514 118) bears the title 'Homage to Kyril Kondrashin', the Russian conductor who died earlier this year, but the soloist is the real interest of the release, for Martha Argerich appears in this country so rarely nowadays that any chance to hear her in concert should be seized. This is a recording of a concert performance with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in 1980, charged with quite exceptional electricity. In this kind of fearful mood Argerich is a law unto herself, mixing ferocity with delicacy quite magically. Because of the infrequency of her performances her exceptional abilities – ranking her alongside Pollini as the pick of the generation of pianists now in their thirties – are underrated. This provides an opportunity to make amends. □

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**DANCE:** Stephanie Jordan

# Facing problems

TECHNICAL problems apparently prevented Montreal-based **Les Grands Ballets Canadiens** from bringing some choice repertoire to the Royal Festival Hall this month, but three programmes, a mixture of familiar and new each night, gave the measure of their achievements over 25 years as a company. Exuberant personality is one of company's most endearing qualities. It has been sensible and fortunate too in engaging the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Vladimir Jelinek.

Waving not so much the red Maple Leaf as the tricolour of Laurentian separatism, Brian Macdonald's *Tam Ti Delam* is a Québecois hoedown to fulsomely orchestrated traditional tunes, led by John Stanzel, a dancer from the earliest days of the company, here playing a loveable, beady-eyed, spoon-playing, singing local grandpa in among the lads and lasses.

The backbone of the repertoire is three Balanchine classics that are lent out rather too regularly from the choreographer's own New York City Ballet to assorted companies in Europe and America. They form a varied trio: the romantic, impetuous *Serenade,* the superb chamber work *Concerto Barocco* and *The Four Temperaments,* mercurial and comparatively severe. *Concerto* shows the Canadians at their best, accurate and lively during the fast outer movements. Interpretations of the other two works are pale, but stylish dancing by Jerilyn Dana and Andrea Davidson raised standards in all three.

Two archival miniatures are included: *Soaring* (1920) by American modern dance pioneer Doris Humphrey assisted by Ruth St Denis and *Polonaise* (1933) by Ted Shawn, St Denis's husband and partner. A less excusable piece of programming was the inclusion of Maurice Bejart's *Firebird* (1970), incongruously retaining only the colourful suite from Stravinsky's folk-song-permeated masterpiece to illustrate boiler-suited young rebels. Apart from Rey Dizon in the title role, the company looked unconvinced by this museum piece of radical chic.

We are already acquainted with Ronald Hynd's choreography from his conversational *Sanguine Fan* for London Festival Ballet. His *Les Valses* to Ravel, an extension of an earlier piece set for the New London Ballet is a woolly-minded attempt at historical allegory: SS Thirties, an ocean-going liner, sails into the Gathering Storm while, on board, a party proceeds relentlessly and blindly until the final, certainly unexpected torpedo. It is really an excuse for dressing up the passengers like Edward and Wally and putting them through an interminable sequence of waltz routines.

Of the homegrown products, Linda Rabin's *Tellurian* belongs to the claimed avant-garde end of the repertoire. Her clarity and economy, while sometimes admirable, are at others simply the result of overplaying too few ideas.

Brian Macdonald is also represented by *Double Quartet* for three men and one woman, a bright dance to Schubert's *Quartettsatz in C minor* succeeded by desperate writhing and much longer choreography to the copious *glissandi* of a quartet by the Canadian R. Murray Schafer.

The dangers facing *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens* are those experienced by repertory companies everywhere: that familiar works invite technical comparison and that new ones may not match up in choreographic quality. Despite a few promising soloists, this company either finds itself struggling to overcome these problems or simply has not faced up to them. □

**TELEVISION:** William Boyd

# Junketing

ANNIVERSARIES are here to stay, I predict. This week's was *Sixty Years of the BBC.* A month or so back it was *Wildlife Jubilee;* before that it was *21 Years of Independent Television.* As television's short history slowly lengthens so will more and more opportunities present themselves: *Three Decades of Weather Forecasting, 5000 Hours of Crossroads,* and so on. What's particularly galling is that it's got precious little to do with celebrating; what we're really talking about is recycling old programmes, keeping under departmental budgets and filling air time out of season.

It does throw up the odd bonus of course, usually of the ephemeral nostalgic kind. It was indeed beguiling to see a few clips of Hans and Lotte Haas during the *Wildlife* junketing, but the fond glow of memory didn't last that long and was nowhere near sufficient to justify anything more than a two-minute clip. Such interest in old programmes has, in any case, little to do with the programmes themselves: they're a route to the viewer's past rather than television's.

The current thrash, though, is being rather more blatantly meretricious. The best way of celebrating 60 years of the BBC, it seems to be saying, is to show programmes made in the 1970s: hardly ransacking the archives for new material. The one genuine new feature was *Wogan's Guide to the BBC* (BBC-1), in which the eponymous presenter did a whimsical whistle-stop tour of the institution, glancing at the post room (3 million letters a year), the special effects dept, the costume hangar and the by now almost obligatory visits to the Radio 3 cricket commentators – legends in their own time – and, you guessed it, the weathermen.

Somebody, somewhere, thinks that people are fascinated by TV weather forecasting. Rather like the old chestnut that everyone in their childhood wanted to be an engine driver, so the notion has got about that a visit to the weather centre is going to provide a massive vicarious thrill for the viewing audience. Why? How? It's extremely boring. The anecdotes about weathermen's gaffes and pratfalls are very dull too.

It's perhaps a measure of how much the BBC has changed that a programme designed to celebrate its past can spend a fair amount of time doing a bit of not-so-subtle advertising about what's coming up on our screens in the near future. There was some gratuitous nakedness to whet our appetites for the new mega-series on the Cleopatras and a location visit to a Devon sand pit where a remake of *Beau Geste* is being filmed – between cloudbursts. It was this piece of absurdity that brought out the best in Wogan, as he prowled about the set and pseudo-desert in raincoat and Wellington boots. Wogan's cheery cynicism is his strongest asset and far more effective than the faux-naif tones with which he alternates it. He referred to himself twice as 'an old hobbledehoy', as if he didn't really know what he was doing and couldn't really understand how a simple Irish lad like him happened to find himself in such an exalted position. It has a very hollow ring to it these days.

But, to be fair, it's usually employed to encourage people to make fools of themselves. Which, invariably, they obligingly do. Quizzing celebrities at a BBC function, Wogan ingenuously asked them to sum up their impressions of working for the BBC James Burke sounded like a man badly in need of a job as he harped on about the 'incredibly bright and talented individuals' who staffed the organisation, while Esther Rantzen produced a contorted epigram that somehow equated working for the BBC with sex – much to the disquiet of her attendant husband. Wogan didn't need to say a thing. This is another of his strong points: he brings out the worst in people. □

**THEATRE:** Benedict Nightingale

# Wry & sly

**Charan the Thief** *Riverside*
**And All Things Nice** by CAROL WILLIAMS *Old Red Lion*

Peter Brook has evidently found in the Naya Theatre of Madhya Pradesh something approaching that ideal of innocence and effectiveness in search of which he has long been ransacking the world's playhouse. 'They represent an absolute extreme of purity,' he has written:

> A peasant company directed by a highly sophisticated man who brings them up to town and takes every conceivable precaution to prevent the town from contaminating them. They go back to their villages at harvest time. They speak their local Hindi patois.

Precisely what this means isn't clear. Does Habib Tanvir, their 'highly sophisticated' director, impose a ten o'clock curfew on the company, taking along heavies with whips to prevent them venturing out of their lodgings? Are they now being compulsorily embussed each morning and driven to Kew, to ensure they get their proper intake of chlorophyl? Even if the nannying is milder, it still sounds a bit paternalistic. Purity is not, after all, a commodity that can be imposed from outside, nor innocence one that should be artificially sustained, whatever Peter Brook may think.



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In any case, one of the company's most attractive qualities is a sort of wily resilience, the feeling it collectively transmits of knowing its mind and being able to take care of itself. I would have thought its members were more likely to contaminate the city with their unaffected yet not unsophisticated humour than themselves be contaminated by the city's cynicism, apathy or whatever. Certainly, that was the impression one had at Riverside last week. It wasn't just politeness to foreigners, still less a patronising predilection for 'primitive' folk-art, that caused a mainly British audience to receive **Charan the Thief** so rapturously. Rather, it was sheer enjoyment, combined with respect for skills variegated in themselves and always well integrated with the text the company had improvised with Mr Tanvir. These are no cloistered mummers, but an accomplished ensemble with a style all their own.

I mean, think of a British company that could send its men rhythmically spinning and roistering round the stage, feet at one point entwined round each others' ankles, then bring on a tiny chorus of women to sing sly anti-establishment songs about the nature of wealth and theft, their arms and hands floating this way and that in deft, graceful gestures, and then launch effortlessly back into an entertainingly ironic tale. This involves a thief inveigled by a guru into making several vows, the principal of which are never to marry a queen or become ruler of a country and never to tell a lie. Surprisingly, truthfulness mainly helps him in his chosen profession, or at least doesn't actually prevent him robbing landlords, temples and the royal treasury; and it is the more improbable pledge that brings about his downfall, death and transformation into secular saint and martyr. Whether the result has 'great contemporary social relevance', as Tanvir claims, I don't know. It does have energy and inventiveness and, with both, a wry, canny, slightly self-mocking quality that is neither the self-consciousness Brook deplores nor the innocence that so allures him, but something more authentic and amiable than either.

Carol Williams is a 19-year-old black Londoner; and **All Things Nice** is about a black teenage Londoner who abandons home, school and a shambling white boyfriend for a squat with punks who lure her into casual prostitution. It would be tendentious, and probably libellous, to call this autobiographical. But it has at least as much freshness and plausibility as Andrea Dunbar's much-praised play about a pregnant teenager called Andrea, *The Arbor;* and it also shows evidence of a good, reflective mind. For instance Ms Williams sees what's worthy of respect in the girls who mislead her protagonist – their camaraderie and defiance, their belief, beneath anarchic rage and despair, that there are some rules and bonds you don't break – and also what's self-absorbed, petulant and babyish in Carol herself. She's seen throughout, not as the helpless victim of a white establishment, but as someone with free-will, ability and responsibility for and over herself. A refreshing corrective, dare I say, to the glum determinism that so often operates in our 'concerned' drama these days. □

# WEEKEND COMPETITION

**No 2735** **Set by John Sweetman**

Recently Radio 4's *Quote Unquote* produced this eavesdrop – 'It's the last thing you'd expect of a goat, especially when Bob's so keen on Handel.' Explanations, please. Form up to you; max. 120 words or eight lines of verse. By 17 September.

**No 2732** **Set by Jerry Mander**

Meaningless proverbs in Franglais with copies of Messrs Harrap's new *Shorter French and English Dictionary,* published this week, as the bait. Apols, by the way, to that noble firm for calling it an 800-page vol. when 1800-page would be nearer the mark.

**Report** **By Mercy Dash**

Comme Jean Sweetman a dit avec quelque exasperation, 'J'ai trouvé ce comp tres tricky. En Franglais on starts avec des idioms Anglais sous-standable mais ici on starts avec rubbish et la thread est broken. On est tempté d'ecrire les notes explanatoire.' Trop true. L'autre temptation, beaucoup succumbed to, specialment par Monsieur Fagg, était de actually faire sense. Tout le same, some de vous ont succedé dans combining le semblance de significance avec vrai significancelessness, et tout dans les raisonable attempts à Franglais. Deux quid book tokens pour chaque proverb et pour les troubles de Jean S. et also un dictionnaire apiece à les premiers trois winners printed.

Seulement un cretin march deux temps autour des revolving doors.
Ne dippez-pas votre mitt dans le wishing-well quand le plumbing est up le shoot.
NELL L. WREGIBLE

Le policeman ne choit pas son beat mais tout le même il le livre.
L'hedg'og regard le oak arbre sans peur.
JÉDEDIAH BARRAULT

Un homme qui poissons pour les rabbits est un droit charles.
V. ERNEST COX

Regardez suspiciousment le bookie qui porte une ball-point plume dans ses dents d'or.
FRANK ANDERSON

When en Portsmouth do as Pompidou.
STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Le chat doit porter sa fur-coat, même sur un nudist beach.
PETER NORMAN

La preuve du garage est dans le parking.
DAVID MACEY

Le good egg ne moque pas l'oeuf du parson.
T. GRIFFITHS

He qui sticks son tête dans la bouche d'un lion n'est pas toujours un dentist.
ALASDAIR BROWN

La pornographie est pour encourager les oats.
P. W. R. FOOT

Près la pipe d'outflow il y a plenty de merde dans la mer et beaucoup de sand dans le shit.
MARTIN FAGG

# TAKING PART

John McVicar

## Fording the Channel

THIS YEAR's UK car market is reckoned to be trying to place 2 million new vehicles to only one and a half million new customers. By any economic logic, this should mean that both the new and used car markets are a buyer's paradise – which as anyone currently buying a car knows is not the case. The flaw in the logic is that the motor trade is about as honest as politics and a poor car dealer is as rare a bird as a politician who admits to lying.

There is definitely something about the car trade which defies economic logic and, for that matter, human nature. I'm actually quite friendly with a number of car dealers, but while they'd lend me money or lie for me in court I couldn't trust them to sell me a reliable second-hand car. Accordingly, when I entered the car market recently, I did so through the private classified ads for second-hand cars in *Exchange and Mart* and London's sole evening paper, the *New Standard,* in order to bypass the car dealers.

Two weeks of ringing sellers and occasionally inspecting their vehicles didn't result in my clinching a deal but it did provide me with further examples of the madness of the car market. It's amazing the number of cars advertised in these columns which are the second car of a 'careful, elderly lady'. And how can anyone imagine that 'one-owner doctor's car' is the seal of a good buy? However, the big problem with buying a car from these columns is that, invariably, the advertised price is one the sellers pray for rather than the one they'll take. This means that finding out the real prices in order to be able to make comparisons between different cars is arduous and frustrating. Moreover, actually finding out the real price often involves you in an exchange which smacks of bidding for the car rather than merely ascertaining its price.

Frustration with the private sellers drove me to investigate the potential of Warren Street. 'The Street', as it's known, is situated near Regent's Park and is a sort of second-hand car traders' free port where the daunting condition of survival is that you learn to tuck up other car dealers. Although it's dying from the depredations of traffic wardens and the competition of car auctions, The Street still sports some of the most slippery characters engaged in the business of living well while officially living on the bread line.

In contrast with the classified columns, the one thing you can get in Warren Street is a deal. The traders want to take money and turn over stock rather than haggle. If



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they have a price they won't take a bid and, if they'll take a bid, it's expected to be a commitment to buy, not an enquiry. And if you want to drive the vehicle – something they'd never stoop to doing if *they* were buying – they just throw you the keys and go back to studying their bible – the monthly run-down on trade prices, the *Glasses Guide*. It's for these reasons that they don't encourage private buyers, preferring the more invigorating and honourable challenge of fleecing their own kind.

I didn't buy down Warren Street either, but one of its traders did point me in the right direction – a personal import. It's difficult to put a figure on it, but this year roughly 75,000 people in the UK are expected to import a car personally, chiefly from other EEC countries. The main reason for the traffic is that if an importer buys wisely he can save upwards of 25 per cent of the price he'd pay in the UK. This is because of differing pricing strategies by the car manufacturers, different taxation policies of the countries concerned and shifts in exchange rates offering savings which outweigh the costs of actually collecting and importing the car.

However, importing a car yourself isn't as simple as flying over to Belgium or Germany with a banker's draft, buying the car and driving back. Ford's prices in West Germany may be 20 per cent down on current UK prices, but only on 1982 stock, which is nearly exhausted. 1983 prices won't offer sufficient advantage on prices over here to make a personal import attractive. There is also a general reluctance by the manufacturers, customs and taxation officials to facilitate the traffic. This August, for example, Ford of West Germany was ordered by the European Commission to resume sales of right-hand drive cars, although it hasn't yet complied with the ruling. British Leyland, on the other hand, sells in some countries at 20 per cent less than its UK prices but refuses to supply right-hand specification on these vehicles, despite this being against EEC regulations, because it claims that they will be re-exported back to the UK.

I commissioned an agency called 'Hatchbacks of Kingston' to organise my trip and, in doing so, met an engaging chap called Derek Taylor, who for his £100 commission ordered my car in West Germany and set up my travel arrangements. I flew to Düsseldorf in the morning, caught a cab to the company supplying the car, drove to Calais and was going through customs at Dover by 7pm.

According to Derek Taylor his typical customer 'is not your average man-in-the-street. He's a person who's got a bit of money and looks after it and is always on the lookout for a bargain. I could profile him – he's got 2.4 children, he reads *Which?* magazine and the *Daily Telegraph*; he's in a steady salaried job or runs his own business; he believes in free enterprise and doesn't like bureaucracy or big business. And like you, John, he gets a kick out of beating the system. I've worked out that on your *Fiesta* you'll save yourself about £400 for a day's work, but I bet that's not as important to you as screwing all those civil servants and executives who don't want you to go.'

I suppose it is always nice to benefit from the latest dodge, especially when it's legal, but it still seems mad that a UK citizen can travel to West Germany, buy a new Ford, travel back, pay customs and save £400 over the cost of the same vehicle here, *at a time when the market is on the floor.* □


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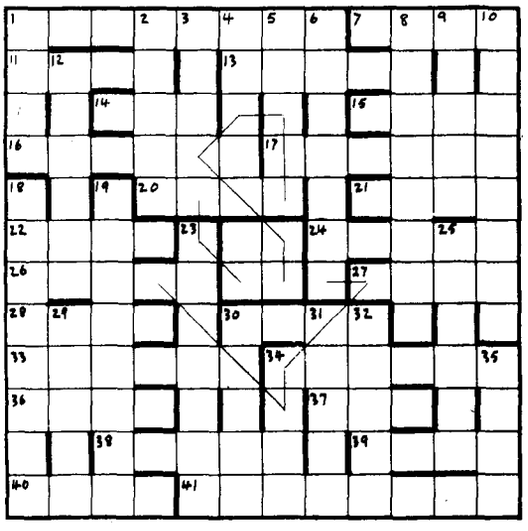
**NEW STATESMAN INDEX**
The index to Vol. 103 (January-June 1982) is now available, price £1.25, post free, from the publisher: 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ.


# Salamanca 59

## 'More Of The Same'

**PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 59, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 28 September.**



Study of the finished grid should provide justification and explanation for what must appear in the four centre squares. (The more complicated courses are indicated.)

Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

1 Letters once on MG amid a square (8)
7 Brandy, cause of mass car crash (4) . . .
11 . . . excessive on the other side (4)
13 What remains of a blazing crash especially (5)
14 Plump one getting out of car (3)
15 The Mirafiori's occupant? (4)
16 Hooligans knocking helmet off bobby and breaking bone (6)
17 Aston Martin, English model? No matter these are negative (6)
20 One with burst tyre mostly hoping for recognition by the cultural? (4)
21 Somebody leading part of force (4)
22 Old collector that could get sop out of a shop? (4)
24 See man abnormally large (5)
26 Bird seeing one at a distance could cry this name (5)
27 Drive hard with one to road junction (4)
28 Petrol station – you could make Opel start – – – – this (4)
30 State of whole pavement area, not the ends (4)
33 In collision with a sign about end of street (6)
34 Sheep murmur on railway (6)
36 It may be raised by angry driver during reversing, followed by 'F–!' (4)
37 Man in the street saying this back (3)
38 Province you'll see a learner driver in about noon (5)
39 Peer with difficulty having to make a test of (4) . . .
40 . . . odd case, a sign of primitive graffito (4)
41 Band involved in lee-road's repair (8)

DOWN

1 Like cathedrals seen rising among city modernisations (4)
2 Heavy vehicle arrives – a black one (5)
3 It may be parked in space to turn round (5)
4 The sweet spoils of war? (4)
5 One on an incline, in a swerve (5)
6 River language with no name (7)
8 Mother soused on spirit (8)
9 Sun's in hiding, so it's – – – – – ? (5)
10 Costers, out in first light, might need their protection (8)
12 You French and German sound like magic (6)
18 By which to recognise old pub one afternoon? (8)
19 Are lists made up of such crosses? (8)
23 Extraordinary luau needs sun? (7)
25 Explosion – car is involved – crazies seen blowing up (6)
29 Van i.e. in smash-up unaffected (5)
30 In Scotland intend to send short letter (5)
31 When out for a spin, inside these? (5)
32 Phrase toper's slurred (5)
34 Enclosure containing man, wife and children? (4)
35 Song coming from slope that's deserted (4)

**Solution to Salamanca 58**

Lib., Lab., & Con. in answers change to SDP.

**Prizewinners to Salamanca 58**

C. J. Butler (Cowdenbeath)
J. P. Mernagh (Wrotham)
Myra Stokes (Bristol)



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To reply to a Box, write to Box No. . . . at the above address.

## Appointments

### West Midlands County Council

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT

**The County Council has established this Unit to assist in developing and implementing a radical set of economic policies in response to the serious economic problems facing the West Midlands. It is made up of 28 officers in 7 teams under the Senior Adviser on Economic Development.**

**Following internal reorganisation, and the secondment of some officers to the newly created West Midlands Enterprise Board Limited (with which County Officers work closely) a number of vacancies have now arisen.**

#### Inner Areas Work

**1 post up to £15,198 – Post Ref: ED.A**
**1 post up to £10,581 – Post Ref: ED.B**

The senior officer is required to lead a team of 5 responsible for providing the economic input into the development and implementation of the County Council's policy for inner areas (which includes the Birmingham Partnership area and the Wolverhampton Programme area). This involves a budget of some £4 million. The Council is currently seeking to increase the emphasis of its policy on projects which bring direct benefit to individuals and communities in the inner areas.

The second officer will be a member of the above team and be responsible for developing projects to create or retain employment opportunities and will represent the County Council in meetings with businesses, community groups and other agencies.

Applicants should be highly motivated and preferably have experience of the negotiating machinery involved.

#### Economic Projects

**1 post up to £10,581 – Post Ref; ED.C**
**1 post up to £8,733 – Post Ref: ED.D**

Although the West Midlands Enterprise Board has been established to undertake investments in local companies which lead to job creation or retention, some projects will call for direct assistance from the County Council.

These 2 officers will work closely with the Board and develop other projects which will result in job creation in the West Midlands. Existing projects include the Warwick University Science Park and a loan interest relief scheme.

Applicants should be capable of developing initiatives in conjunction with local businesses, work forces and community groups.

#### Manpower Planning and Training

**1 post up to £9,993 – Post Ref: ED.E**
**1 post up to £8,733 – Post Ref: ED.F**

These 2 officers will be responsible for negotiating with outside organisations to set up particular training projects and will also contribute a manpower planning dimension to the Unit's work on industrial strategy and economic planning.

Applicants should ideally have skills relating to both work areas, but must have experience and demonstrable ability in one.

**Salaries will be negotiable at interview and all posts will be on a 2 or 3-year fixed term contract. Secondment arrangements from existing employers will be considered for suitable candidates.**

**Application forms (returnable by 20th September, 1982) and further details available from: County Personnel Officer, West Midlands County Council, County Hall, Birmingham B4 7DJ. Telephone: 021-300 7824.**

**The County Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer**

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### UNIVERSITY OF EAST ANGLIA

**Norwich**

### *EASTERN ARTS WRITING FELLOWSHIP*

The University jointly with the Eastern Arts Association is offering a Fellowship to be held by a practising writer during the Summer Term 1983. The Fellowship offers an opportunity to the Fellow to pursue his own work, to offer support to students with their own creative writing, and to make a contribution to the artistic life of the region. The salary is

**£2,000 plus free flat and office**

The Fellow will be expected to be in residence for the ten weeks of term, and for a further four weeks of vacation either before or after the term, or split, at the Fellow's convenience.

Further details from **The Establishment Officer, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR4 7TJ,** to whom applications should be sent by **25 September 1982.**

---

### National Association of Probation Officers

This professional association and trade union, based in Battersea, seeks applications from persons who can communicate effectively, orally and in writing and who can demonstrate the ability to work within a committee structure and in a senior representational role.

£11,244 – £13,146 (incl. London Weighting)

#### Assistant General Secretary (1)

The successful applicant will have significant experience of pay negotiations, conditions of service issues and industrial relations matters. Some probation or social work experience an advantage.

#### Assistant General Secretary (2)

The successful applicant will have had experience in probation, social work or a related field and will be capable of working on a wide range of professional and social policy issues. He/she will also be a competent administrator. Experience in public or parliamentary relations an advantage.

Advantageous for either post will be editorial experience, legal background or training, experience in public speaking, special interest in penal affairs and the criminal justice system.

NAPO is a small organization requiring a co-operative and adaptable approach to work. Willingness to work flexible hours and to travel, essential.

*Further details from: The General Secretary, NAPO, 3/4 Chivalry Road, Battersea, SW11 1HT. Closing date for applications: 24th September. Interviews: 6th – 8th October.*

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### OXFORD POLYTECHNIC

**Department of Town Planning**

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

### *TWO RESEARCH ASSOCIATES*

required

The above project, funded by the D.o.E., and directed by Dr P. Healey and Dr M. J. Elson, requires two research associates, tenable 22-24 months from December 1, 1982. Salary up to £8,100 per year. Relevant research experience and knowledge of the planning system are desirable.

*Application form and further particulars from:*

**Deputy Administrator**
**Oxford Polytechnic**
**Oxford, OX3 0BP**
**(Tel: Oxford 0865 64777)**

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**OV SELECTION CATERS** for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

## Jobs Abroad

**PICK GRAPES** September/October, Switzerland or France. Send large SAE to: VW1, 9 Park End Street, Oxford.

## Appointments Wanted

**GRADUATE SEEKS** work, central(ish) London. Anything considered. 56a Granville Park, Lewisham SE13.

## Accommodation Vacant

**HOLLAND PARK.** Own large room, spacious garden flat. M/f. Single £120, double £180 inc. p.c.m. 01-603 9202.

**SPACE AVAILABLE** in large, communal house in Manchester. Rent £64 per month, plus expenses. 061-445 1851.

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### WORKER

required for the National Office of an activist film/cultural organisation. Administrative and office skills required; campaigning experience preferred. Salary £6,250 p.a. (under review). Write for job description to: **IFA, 79 Wardour Street, London W.1.** Closing date: **20 September.**

---

The National Council for Civil Liberties needs a

### FULL/PART-TIME ASSISTANT

to the General Secretary

Salary £6,000 pro rata (Under review). Fast accurate typing essential. Please write enclosing s.a.e. for job and application form to: **NCCL, 21 Tabard Street, London SE1 4LA.**

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**THORNHILL NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT** requires 2 workers: Health Worker to continue work on primary health care with particular emphasis on involving women. Energy Worker for a 'Jobs from Warmth' project looking at ways of creating employment through improving council heating systems, working with tenants, trade unionists and energy group. Salary for both jobs: £8,000 under review. Further information: TNP, Orkney House, Caledonian Road, N1. Closing date: 20 September.



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# Research and Intelligence Working for local Councillors

Hackney is a leading Labour-controlled Authority, working on a number of fundamental changes in the way it provides services to the community, and the extent to which the community can influence and control the decision – making process.
The Council have created a number of new posts to directly assist councillors in the development of new ideas, policies and the implementation of services. If you have a commitment to the policies and attitudes of an inner-city authority like Hackney and are looking for direct involvement in local political life, these jobs could be for you. Ideal candidates will probably be aged mid-twenties and above, with some relevant experience in a research/ intelligence – type capacity.

## Principal Research Officer

**£10,536-£11,589 Ref: AF742/G**

To directly assist the political Leader of the Council. You will be involved in gathering information and research for analysis and appraisal, to test the feasibility and impact of Council policies. You will lead the work of the research unit into all policy areas, most frequently at the specific request of the Leader. You will need to develop an awareness of the information and issues that need to be brought to the Leader's attention.

## Personal Assistants to "Chairs" of Committees

**£8,883-£9,454 Ref: AF743/G**

To directly assist all "Chairs" of main committees. You will need to maintain "chairs" awareness of conditions and problems in the community that directly affect their committees. You should expect to attend meetings with outside agencies including local groups and members of the public, advise 'chairs' on the content and validity of reports in their area of responsibility and investigate issues of specific interest to the 'chairs'.

## Senior Research Officer

**£9,741-£10,269 Ref: AF744/G**

Reporting directly to the Principal Research Officer, you will be responsible for the development, management and disemination of information held in the Member's Library, both for the benefit of councillors and senior managers and officers. Some experience and knowledge of library operations and classification systems would be desirable.

# Breaking Down Barriers – Organisational Change

## Principal Project Officer – Decentralisation

**Career Grades £10,536-£13,119 pa inc (July salary award pending) Ref: AF 726/G**

Hackney has decided to make fundamental changes in the way it provides services to the community, and the extent to which the community can influence and control the decision-making processes.
The Council is aiming to decentralise a wide range of services and staff to neighbourhood offices, to break down the boundaries between the different professions and grades of workers, between those who carry out decisions and those who make them, and between those who meet the public face to face and those who have little contact.
Manpower Services is a corporate function of about 40 staff providing a service to the Council in the fields for organisation design and development, manpower planning and the application and implementation of advanced office systems and communication technology.

**As Principal Project Officer – Decentralisation.** You will join a multi-disciplinary team working on the policies, practices and implementation of the Council's emerging decentralisation objectives, liaising closely with politicians, top management, unions and community organisations.

You must have a successful track record in the field of organisational change and change processes, preferably in the public sector; be committed to the objectives of decentralisation, and show evidence of the personal skill and knowledge necessary to make such a major change actually happen. Evidence of supervisory skills would be desirable.

***For further information and an application form, write to Director of Personnel and Secretariat, Town Hall, Mare Street, London, E8 1EA, or telephone 01-986 7539 (24 hour answering service) quoting job reference.***
***Closing date: 20 September.***

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# Financial

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# LISTINGS

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**Radical/Arts**
**Political**

**3-11 September**

**SEND DETAILS to: NS FREE LISTINGS at least 7 days in advance**

## FRI 3 SEPT

**LONDON WC1.** Film – 'The Patriot Game'. 70p (30p u/w). 7.30 p.m. Holborn Central Library, 32/38 Theobalds Road, N. London. Irish Solidarity Committee.

**3-5 SEPTEMBER. HERTS.** CND Campaign Training Skills Weekend. £7. Canon Frome, Ledbury. Details: **0272 513631.**

## SAT 4 SEPT

**LONDON W6.** Equity meeting. Hugh Manning, President, speaks on 'Equity, Its Present and Possible Future'. 11 a.m. Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

**LONDON E14.** Ian Mikardo speaks at Labour History Museum. 3 p.m. Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Rd.

**LONDON E2.** E. London CND. Sizewell Stomp with Dolly Mixtures, Jim Barclay, Walking Wounded, Reddy Rubbed. £2 (£1 u/w). Poplar Civic Hall, Bow Road.

**4-5 SEPTEMBER. ALFRISTON, SUSSEX.** English Vineyard Wine Festival. Noon-6 pm. £3. English Wine Centre, Drusillas Corner. **0323 870532.**

**4-8 SEPTEMBER. LONDON to BRIGHTON.** – Workers March Against Racism from Brick Lane to TUC Conference in Brighton. Details **01-274 3951. W.A.R.**

## SUN 5 SEPT

**5-17 SEPTEMBER, LONDON E1.** Rally & March for a Safe Future. Rally speakers: Paul Boateng and Jo Richardson MP. March starts to Sizewell 11 a.m. On green in Burdett Road, next to Mile End tube. **Tel. 01-515 5305.**

**LIVERPOOL.** Event – 'Liberty Hall' with Babylon Rebels & Open Mind. 8 p.m. Stanley House Community Centre, Upper Parliament Street.

**BRIGHTON.** 'Voices for Peace & Liberation' Rally. 7 p.m. The Pavilion Theatre, New Road.

## MON 6 SEPT

**LONDON W1.** 'Ladies and Nurses in the Crimean War.' History Workshop Seminar. 6.45 p.m. Upstairs at the Black Horse, 6 Rathbone Place.

## TUES 7 SEPT

**LEICESTER.** Film 'A Better Road to Peace' plus talk on Civil Defence. 7.30 p.m. Blackfriars Hall, Wellington Street, Leicester CND.

**LONDON E1.** Meeting 'Alternative Defence Strategy' with Dan Smith. 7.30 p.m. THAP Bookshop, 178 Whitechapel Road. T. H. Febian Soc.

**LONDON W5.** Poland. Public meeting. 8 p.m. Ealing Town Hall. (Ealing LP.)

## WED 8 SEPT

**LONDON NW1.** Meeting for unemployed. 10 a.m. Camden Unemployed Action Centre, 102 St Pancras Way.

**BRIGHTON.** Labour Solidarity Campaign Meeting Speakers: Gwyneth Dunwoody, Roy Hattersley, Peter Shore, Bryan Stanley. 5.15 p.m. Ballroom, Old Ship Hotel.

**LONDON W1.** Concert for victims of Chilean repression. 7 p.m. Free. St. James Church, Piccadilly.

**LONDON W1.** Lectures on Ancient Egypt, weekly. Egyptian Education Bureau, 4 Chesterfield Gardens. **01-491 7720.**

## THURS 9 SEPT

**BRIGHTON.** ANC fringe meeting at TUC. 'No American PWR for Britain'. 5.30 p.m. Elizabethan Suite, Queen's Hotel, King's Road. **0742-754691.**

## FRI 10 SEPT

**10-12 SEPTEMBER, LONDON W1.** Socialist Society Summer School. 'The Search for a Viable Socialist Programme'. Workshops. Speakers include: Tony Benn, Peter Tatchell, Robin Blackburn, Ken Livingstone and others. Plus evening event. University of London Union, Malet Street. **Tel: 01-734 8501.**

**10-12 SEPTEMBER, MATLOCK.** Conference – 'The Politics of Information.' Spkrs.: Phillip Whitehead MP., Peter Hennessey, David McKie, Prof. Anthony King, Dr Tony Barker. Details: Politics Association, 14 Wakefield Close, Strood, Rochester, Kent.

**10-12 SEPTEMBER, OXFORD.** Adlerian Society Weekend Workshop, 'Personal Relationships.' St. Hilda's College. **01-789 8086.**

## SAT 11 SEPT

**LONDON W1.** Mass Picket of the Chilean Embassy, 12 Devonshire St. Org. by Chile Solidarity Campaign.

**11-12 SEPTEMBER, CARDIFF.** Weekend school 'Beyond the Nuclear Free Zone'. Speakers: Frank Barnaby, Duncan Rees and others. Tel: Cardiff CND, **0222-493196.**

## FORTHCOMING

**TUESDAYS till 30 NOVEMBER, LONDON EC3.** Lunchtime talks 1.10 p.m. on progress of BILLINGSGATE EXCAVATION. 25p. Public Viewing Gallery, Lower Thames Street. Public viewing daily.

**SEPTEMBER, NIGHTLY, LONDON SW13.** Live Jazz at the Bulls Head, Lonsdale Road.

**13 SEPTEMBER. KINGSTON, SURREY.** 'Nuclear Free Kingston' meeting. Spkrs: Duncan Campbell, Ilityd Harrington. 7.30 p.m. United Reformed Church Hall, Eden St.

**14 SEPTEMBER. LONDON W12.** W.E.A. Course, "The Personal and the Political". 10 weeks, Tuesdays from 14 Sept. 6.30 pm. Project Enterprise, 23 Askew Cres.

**17 SEPTEMBER, LETCHWORTH, HERTS.** 'Labour's Programme 1982' – Michael Meacher MP, 8pm. 50p. Brotherhood Hall, Gernon Rd.

**17-19 SEPTEMBER. SHEFFIELD.** A.C.W. Conference – 'Community Health Issues'. 60 workshops. Food; accommodation, creche, entertainment. Details: Victoria Grandon **0742 77870.**

**25 SEPTEMBER, MANCHESTER.** 'Foreign Policy Implications of British Nuclear Disarmament', Dayschool at Withington Adult Education Centre, Mauldeth Rd., M14. 10am-4pm. Details: 59 Tintern Ave., Manchester M20 8ND.

**1 OCTOBER. LONDONDERRY.** Goldsmiths' Holography Workshop. A touring show of Holograms opens at the Orchard Gallery. Details: **01-733 3716.**

**2 OCTOBER, SHEFFIELD.** 'Defence Policies in the '80s' 9.30 a.m.-4 p.m. Dayschool – speakers include April Carter, Anthony Arblaster, John Field, Phil Asquith, Mary Kaldor. At Bow Centre. **0742-322690.**

**2 OCTOBER, SHEFFIELD.** 'The Peace Movement after the Falklands' Public meeting. Speakers include E. P. Thompson, Kate Soper, Richard Carbon MEP, Jean McCrindle. 7.30 p.m. City Hall. **0742-615388.**

**4 OCTOBER. LONDON W1.** 'A Social Democratic Interpretation of History' – Peter Clarke. History Workshop seminar. 6.45 p.m., Upstairs at the 'Black Horse', 6 Rathbone Place.

**30 OCTOBER. WEMBLEY.** International Conference on Active Birth. Details: Active Birth Movement, 32 Cholmeley Crescent, London N6 5JR. Tel: **01-348 4636.**

**1 NOVEMBER. LONDON W1.** Aspects of Feminism in the early Christian Centuries' – Judith Herrin. History Workshop Seminar, Upstairs, 'Black Horse,' 6 Rathbone Place.

**5-6 NOVEMBER, LONDON WC1.** Fifth Socialist Book Fair. Complete display of socialist, radical and trade union literature. (Details of stands, etc. Tel: Bookmarks 01-802 6145.) Camden Town Hall, Euston Road.

**5-9 NOVEMBER, SHEFFIELD.** History Workshop 16. Subjects inc. Sexual Politics, the State, Peace Movements, People's History. Speakers – Raphael Samual, Sheila Rowbotham, Royden Harrison, Anna Davin. Sheffield City Poly, Pond St. site. **0742 615388.**

**6 NOVEMBER, LONDON SW1.** 'Stop Sizewell B' Rally and conference. Speakers – David Ennals MP, Arthur Scargill, Ken Cameron, Colin Sweet, Dr Don Arnott. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Central Hall, Westminster. **0742-754691.**

***Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.***



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**BRONOWSKI MEMORIAL LECTURE 1981**, 'Four Minutes to Midnight' by Nicholas Humphrey. £1. *New edition by Menard Press, 8 The Oaks,* Woodside Avenue, London N12 8AR. Also: Sir Martin Ryle's **'Is there a Case** for Nuclear Power?'. 60p. Anti-nuclear Jewish New Year cards: Drawing by Josef Herman. Ten for £2.

**WOMEN IN INDIA.** A public meeting and discussion at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1, 7 p.m. Tuesday 7 September. *Speaking:* Ch. Vidya, MP in the Indian Parliament, Hemalata Lavanam, from the Athiest Centre, Vijayawada. Organised by Humanist Organisations.

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